

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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IN RE: *

LISTENING SESSION ON *

COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION *

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AUGUST 14, 2006
10:30 A.M.

COLKET CENTER
ROANOKE COLLEGE
SALEM, VIRGINIA

CENTRAL VIRGINIA REPORTERS
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PANEL:

DONALD WELSH
Regional Administrator
Mid-Atlantic States
Environmental Protection Agency

DAVID TENNY
Deputy Under Secretary for
Natural Resources and Environmental
Department of Agriculture

LYNN SCARLETT
Deputy Secretary
Department of the Interior

WARD BURTON
President
Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation

SCOTT MARTIN
Administrator
Franklin County, Virginia

ALSO PRESENT:

DAVID J. CASE
Listening Session Facilitator

1 The following proceedings were taken at
2 Colket Center at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia,
3 on the 14th day of August, 2006.

4 It was agreed that Teresa W. Guynn, Notary
5 Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia, at
6 Large, would take said proceedings in machine
7 shorthand and transcribe the same by means of
8 computer-aided transcription.

9
10 (10:30 A.M.)

11
12 DAVID CASE: Welcome. It's my great
13 pleasure to welcome you to the second of 24
14 listening sessions on cooperative conservation
15 across the United States. My name is Dave
16 Case, and I'm the facilitator and moderator for
17 today's session.

18 I'd like to start just by giving a very
19 quick introduction to the people that you see
20 up here on the podium.

21 To my far left is Mr. Don Welsh,
22 Regional Administrator for the U.S.
23 Environmental Protection Agency.

24 Next is David Tenny. He is the Deputy

1 Under Secretary for the U.S. Department of
2 Agriculture.

3 Next is Lynn Scarlett, the Deputy
4 Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior.

5 On my right is Scott Martin, County
6 Administrator for Franklin County, Virginia.

7 And, finally, Ward Burton, President of
8 the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation.

9 Now, you'll be hearing more from all of
10 these folks in a few minutes, but next I'd
11 like to ask the Scouts to come up front,
12 please, and while they're coming up, I'll
13 introduce them.

14 We have three different councils or
15 troops represented. First is the Virginia
16 Skyline Council from Salem, Virginia, a Girl
17 Scout Council.

18 Second is the Black Diamond Council from
19 Lewisburg and White Sulphur, West Virginia.

20 And, finally is Troop 51 of the Boy
21 Scouts from Salem, Virginia.

22 And it's an honor to introduce them and
23 to have them lead us in the Pledge of
24 Allegiance.

1 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

2

3 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. They all
4 represent the future of conservation in your
5 country.

6 I'd like to start by giving just a
7 little bit of a quick overview of our agenda
8 for today and the process we're going to
9 follow.

10 In a few minutes, I'll make a few
11 introductions with some of the folks in the
12 audience. We'll follow that with some
13 comments from some of the folks up here on the
14 podium. And then the real reason we all came
15 here was just to hear your comments and your
16 input on cooperative conservation.

17 We've developed a process to try and
18 provide as much opportunity for input as we
19 can and be fair to all the participants.

20 As you came in this morning, you should
21 have gotten an index card that has address
22 information on it as well as a number on the
23 back.

24 And what we'll do is we'll -- once we

1 get through the presentation, we'll just start
2 with number one and ask you to come up to the
3 microphone, one of those microphones, ask that
4 you state your name and if you have a name, a
5 last name that's hard to spell, please spell
6 your last name.

7 We do have a court reporter here today,
8 Teresa, and she will be capturing all the
9 proceedings, and we want to make sure that we
10 capture your information correctly, so if
11 you'll be sure to introduce yourself and spell
12 your name.

13 Tell us who you are, where you're from
14 and if you are an official representing an
15 organization, what that is.

16 In order to be fair and give everyone a
17 chance to participate today, we are going to
18 limit the length of time for the comments.
19 We'll have about two and a-half minutes for
20 comments and I'll show a little card that says
21 your two and a-half minutes are up and then
22 you'll have about 30 more seconds and then
23 I'll just say thank you. And that's just to
24 be fair to give everyone a chance.

1 We did this last week at the first
2 meeting in Spokane, Washington, and we were
3 here for four hours and at the end we actually
4 had to rush to try and get some people on. So
5 we want to, from the beginning, give everyone
6 a chance to comment.

7 Now, you'll notice on your card there is
8 a -- you can send comments in via fax, via
9 regular mail or go on the website and submit
10 comments electronically. So if you're not
11 able to get everything into the two minutes,
12 please feel free to comment.

13 I'll also introduce some people here in
14 a moment that will be here at breaks and also
15 at the end of the session and if you've got
16 questions, you be sure to get with them after
17 the session.

18 So, we want to provide plenty of
19 opportunity for everyone to have input but
20 we're only going to have so much time for
21 people at the microphone.

22 My responsibility is to keep everybody
23 moving, first of all, keep the whole process
24 moving, and secondly, that's to make sure that

1 we stay on track in terms of topics.

2 Obviously, it's not very often you get
3 to come before such a great important group of
4 people, but we are here.

5 The purpose of our listening session is
6 cooperative conservation, so we just ask that
7 you stay on that topic. With that in mind, I
8 apologize in advance if I have to move anyone
9 along time-wise or get people back on topic.

10 Before we get to the formal program, I'd
11 like to acknowledge a few people that are in
12 the audience, and I'll just ask if they could
13 stand just momentarily. These are great
14 people for follow-up questions if you have
15 questions following the session.

16 First, David Whitehurst who's the
17 Director of Wildlife Diversity at the Virginia
18 Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

19 Also from the same department is Steve
20 Capel, the Farm Wildlife Supervisor.

21 Next, Phil Francis is the Superintendent
22 of the Blue Ridge Parkway for the National
23 Park Service.

24 Pete Larkin is from Congressman Bob

1 Goodlatte's office here in Virginia.

2 Steven Dietrich is Regional Director of
3 the Virginia Department of Environmental
4 Quality.

5 Marvin Moriarity is the Regional
6 Director for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
7 based out of Hadley, Massachusetts.

8 Rupert Cutler is on the Board of
9 Directors of Western Virginia Water Authority.

10 Gail Tindal is a Special Assistant in
11 the Environmental Protection Agency.

12 And, finally, it's my great pleasure to
13 introduce Doctor Sabine O'Hara. She is the
14 President of Roanoke College and she's going
15 to provide a welcome. Doctor O'Hara.

16 DOCTOR O'HARA: Thank you. Good
17 morning. I extend a warm welcome to all of
18 you to our beautiful campus between the
19 Appalachians and the Blue Ridge.

20 What better place than to have a
21 listening session on cooperative conservation
22 and what better place than to have it at
23 Roanoke College because Deputy Secretary -- a
24 lot of you may not know this, but one of our

1 alumni at Roanoke College was Secretary for
2 the Treasury, Secretary Follower who endows a
3 public lecture series and so we have quite a
4 number of listening sessions on issues of
5 current affairs on this campus.

6 And my only regret is that it's a little
7 early in the year so our students aren't here
8 yet to sit in, but I see some of our faculty
9 here.

10 And I'm delighted to introduce to the
11 audience Deputy Secretary of the Department of
12 the Interior, Lynn Scarlett.

13 And Ms. Scarlett has been in this
14 position since November of 2005 after her
15 position as Acting Secretary of the Department
16 of the Interior.

17 Ms. Scarlett coordinates the Interior
18 Department's environmental policy initiatives
19 and it is her primary focus at this time to
20 implement the President's executive order on
21 cooperative conservation serving on the White
22 House Cooperative Conservation Task Force.

23 Prior to joining the current
24 administration in July of 2001, she was

1 President of the Los Angeles based Reason
2 Foundation, a not-for-profit organization that
3 concerns itself with research and
4 communications in organizations.

5 And it is my pleasure to turn the podium
6 over to you. Thank you.

7 MS. SCARLETT: Good morning. I am
8 absolutely delighted to be here and thank you,
9 Doctor O'Hara.

10 You know, some of you don't know that
11 this is the perfect place, and she did not
12 herself say for this particular listening
13 session because her own research background
14 is, in fact, in environmental economics, so
15 particularly appropriate.

16 I'd also like to thank our Boy and Girl
17 Scouts that were here just a few moments ago
18 and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. These
19 are young people who themselves have
20 participated in conservation activities in
21 this community and were selected to be here
22 this morning because of that participation.

23 I'd also like to thank Scott Martin and
24 Ward Burton for joining us and I really look

1 forward to hearing their remarks. They have
2 been intimately involved in this community's
3 endeavors in conservation through
4 partnerships, through working together with
5 landowners, with local communities and with
6 our federal and state agencies.

7 Two months ago I had the great
8 opportunity to be in neighboring Mount Royal
9 where I paddled and tugged a canoe along the
10 Pigg River in the annual race. I say tugged
11 because in some places the water was about six
12 inches deep at the time. My daughter called
13 it a modified triathlon where we canoe, ran
14 through the water and swam.

15 But, we had a wonderful time. It was
16 part of a celebration of a Virginia
17 cooperative conservation initiative, the Rural
18 Area Conservation and Economic Restoration
19 Partnership, a collaborative effort that
20 involves landowners, counties, towns,
21 universities, federal and state agencies and a
22 host of other partners who are creating stream
23 buffer zones, planting native vegetation,
24 protecting species at risk, improving water

1 quality.

2 The effort, I think, exemplifies
3 cooperative conservation through its citizen
4 stewardship, a stewardship that engages all of
5 America in their back yards, in their
6 communities and stitch together across a
7 mosaic of land ownerships.

8 We see an efflorescence of these
9 partnerships across the nation, across many
10 lands and many landscapes. These efforts are
11 important because they tap beyond the ground
12 insights and experience of landowners, of
13 local communities, people who know their
14 places better than anyone else knows in the
15 winter and summer and drought and in floods
16 and, therefore, are able to bring forward
17 innovative ideas on how to address
18 conservation and environmental challenges.

19 They're important, too, because they
20 inspire conservation. What more can yield us
21 the vision that the great conservationist
22 Eleanor Leopold had on the nation of citizen
23 stewards than to engage, for example, those
24 Girl Scouts, those Boy Scouts, our neighbors,

1 ourselves in conservation efforts.

2 In Interior and across the
3 administration we're trying to do what we can
4 to nurture these efforts, these efforts that
5 spring from the motivations of individuals and
6 their communities but with which we can
7 partner to help stimulate these efforts and
8 move them along.

9 We're doing that nurturing through
10 grants. At the Department of the Interior we
11 have spent, for example here in Virginia, some
12 12 million dollars last year on cooperative
13 conservation partnerships.

14 But we're also exploring how we might
15 improve our policies, how we might improve our
16 practices to create a better foundation for
17 cooperation for citizen stewardship, for
18 landowner engagement and species protection,
19 habitat protection and so on.

20 And we are here today not to talk, but
21 to listen. We want to hear your thoughts on
22 such questions as how the federal government
23 can enhance wildlife habitat and other
24 conservation outcomes through both our

1 regulatory and our voluntary programs.

2 How can we improve cooperative efforts
3 with states, with tribes, with local
4 communities as we apply our environmental and
5 conservation laws?

6 How can we improve science and the
7 utilization of science to inform the decisions
8 that we take in Washington and with our state,
9 tribal and local community partners?

10 How can we work cooperatively with
11 businesses and landowners to achieve
12 conservation and environment goals?

13 Can we better reflect the interests and
14 concerns of folks with ownership in land, with
15 water interests and concerns and other
16 resource interests issues and concerns?

17 My colleagues at the Department of
18 Agriculture and the Environmental Protection
19 Agency I know join me in looking forward to
20 your comments and I'd like to thank them for
21 their participation.

22 I'd like to conclude, though, with a
23 special thanks to our Fish and Wildlife
24 Service who has really been instrumental in

1 making this particular event come together and
2 also for our National Parks Service.

3 Without those bureaus within the
4 Department of the Interior we simply could not
5 do the conservation efforts that we undertake
6 on a daily basis and for many years. So,
7 thank you for your presence here and thank you
8 for helping to organize this event.

9 With that, I'd like to turn it over for
10 a few brief remarks the microphone to Dave
11 Tenny. Dave Tenny is a long-time colleague of
12 mine. He came into this administration in
13 2001. He serves as the Deputy Under Secretary
14 for Natural Resources and the Environment in
15 the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

16 He's been a great partner with the
17 Department of the Interior on many of our
18 conservation efforts and I'd like give him a
19 warm welcome. Dave.

20 MR. TENNY: Thank you, Lynn. It seems
21 very appropriate for us to be here today with
22 Ms. Scarlett and Ms. O'Hara in this beautiful
23 southern location. I'm sorry.

24 It is a privilege to be with you today

1 to talk about cooperative conservation. It
2 was great to meet the Boy Scouts. I am an
3 assistant scoutmaster of Troop 881 in
4 Chantilly, Virginia, and I am a merit badge
5 counselor for the forestry merit badge. I
6 better be.

7 Last summer I took 14 Boy Scouts to a
8 location not far from here just, in fact, to
9 the west of where we are where we met with a
10 landowner who invited us to camp overnight on
11 his property and we earned together the
12 forestry merit badge learning about
13 watersheds, learning about vegetation, the
14 interaction between the watershed, vegetation,
15 the wildlife, how to be good stewards of the
16 land. A wonderful experience.

17 These young men learned about, among
18 other things, the story of the American
19 Chestnut. I don't know if you know the story
20 of the American Chestnut but at the turn of
21 the century the Chestnut dominated the forest
22 in the Southern Appalachia. It was the
23 backbone tree that built this country in many
24 respects.

1 Unfortunately, a blight infected that
2 tree and literally hundreds of millions of
3 Chestnut trees were lost to the point that
4 Chestnuts before not long ago were unable to
5 grow to full maturity in this country.

6 Well, not long ago through decades of
7 effort, the American Chestnut Foundation in
8 cooperation with the Forest Service and others
9 were able to through lots of hard work develop
10 a blight resistant strain of the American
11 Chestnut.

12 That strain is 95 percent or greater
13 American Chestnut and five percent Asian
14 Chestnut. Well, now they've got the trees,
15 they've got the nurseries and they're now
16 engaged in the process of repopulating the
17 forests of our country with this magnificent
18 tree that was called the Redwood of the East
19 in its day.

20 Now, that's an example in my mind of
21 cooperative conservation at work. If I can
22 illustrate it, that would be the way I would
23 illustrate it. People of goodwill recognizing
24 a need, serving something greater than

1 themselves and doing as a result something
2 that benefits not only people today, our
3 country today, but people in the future, our
4 country in the future all in service of our
5 natural resources.

6 Now, it's not lost on me but the best
7 ideas that came about to restore the American
8 Chestnut did not originate in the federal
9 government. Believe it or not, those best
10 ideas originated in the hearts of people who
11 simply wanted to do good and wanted to share
12 what they had learned and make the world
13 around them a little bit better place. So,
14 that's why we're here.

15 It may surprise you to know that we
16 really don't know everything there is to know
17 about conservation in this great country.
18 We're here to listen, we're here to take notes
19 and to use the information that you provide to
20 help us and help our country to become better
21 stewards of the land and resources that we all
22 value.

23 So, thank you very, very much for having
24 us here in this beautiful place. We look

1 forward to hearing what you have to say. And
2 with that, I'll conclude my remarks and turn
3 our time over to our next speaker.

4 MR. WELSH: Thank you. Hi, I'm Don
5 Welsh. I'm the Regional Administrator of the
6 U.S. EPA Region Three headquartered in
7 Philadelphia but including the Commonwealth of
8 Virginia as part of our region.

9 In addition to that responsibility I've
10 also recently become the joke writer for
11 Deputy Under Secretary Tenny who stole my
12 Scarlett O'Hara line.

13 Even though we are in the Environmental
14 Protection Agency we realize that
15 environmental protection is everybody's
16 responsibility and not just ours and that's
17 why we're so encouraged to see so many folks
18 who have their own ideas and their own
19 initiative and their own drive to do good
20 things for the environment.

21 President Bush has given a charge to the
22 Environmental Protection Agency that we
23 accelerate the pace of environmental
24 protection while maintaining our nation's

1 economic competitiveness and one of the
2 primary tools that we have to do that and one
3 of the core principals that our administrator,
4 Steve Johnson, is asking all of us to follow
5 is collaboration, working with other people to
6 help get that job done.

7 So, it is nice to know that there's an
8 army of citizen conservationists around the
9 country who are working on their own ideas to
10 help promote cooperative conservation and
11 protect the environment.

12 There are many federal programs we have
13 where we have to come and tell somebody what
14 to do and those programs are necessary and we
15 have to have them, but I think we get a lot
16 more done for the environment when rather than
17 telling someone what to do, we come and try to
18 help you do something you've already decided
19 to do.

20 And so many of you here today have
21 already started to work on something that will
22 conserve our nation's resources and protect
23 the environment and we're happy to try to find
24 some federal tools to help you get that job

1 done.

2 We think that the greatest gain for the
3 environment will take place by those types of
4 efforts where you already have decided to make
5 your community a better place to live and we
6 can try to find some ways to help you rather
7 than to try to tell people what to do.

8 So, I'm very anxious to listen to the
9 ideas that you have. If you can suggest ways
10 that we can do that job better, give you some
11 additional tools to get that work done or
12 maybe getting out of your way so you can get
13 the work done, we'd be very anxious to hear
14 that.

15 So, what we want to do today is try to
16 keep up that momentum that's been building for
17 cooperative conservation and learn from you
18 how the federal government can be a better
19 partner. Thank you.

20 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you, Mr. Welsh,
21 and other panelists. Next, we'd like to have
22 two presenters to present our project that we
23 think captures the spirit of cooperative

24 conservation to kind of set the stage for the

1 next session after that which will be all of
2 your comments.

3 I'd would like to introduce those two
4 speakers first. Scott Martin. Scott is our
5 Director of Commerce and Leader Services in
6 Franklin County, Virginia.

7 And secondly, Ward Burton. For many of
8 you that are NASCAR fans, he needs no
9 introduction. He's the winner of the 2002
10 Daytona 500 among many other things and now is
11 the President of the Ward Burton Wildlife
12 Foundation.

13 So with that, I'd like to introduce
14 Scott.

15 MR. MARTIN: Thank you. I appreciate
16 that. It's a wonderful honor to be here with
17 Secretary Scarlett again, and I appreciate your
18 commitment. You should have seen her at the
19 Pigg River ramble. I was beside her for a
20 long portion of drag, push and haul on a canoe
21 race and she did outstanding and I think
22 placed fifth in the tandem female category
23 which was not a bad accomplishment. So, we
24 appreciate you coming out our way.

1 MS. SCARLETT: I think you're wrong.
2 You said tandem female.

3 MR. MARTIN: Collaborative conservation
4 is critical to our community. As many of you
5 all know, Southside Virginia took a double hit
6 in the economy of the 1990s when we lost only
7 textiles, but we also lost furniture
8 manufacturing. Our economy was hurting and
9 still is.

10 However, as we as a community seek to
11 rebuild our community's economic fortune, we
12 look to the environment now to serve a
13 slightly different function than what it was.

14 It's no accident when you look around
15 the nation you see the cities and communities
16 that are growing what's happening.

17 It's no accident that Asheville, North
18 Carolina, is growing like mad or Boulder or
19 Bent. You can run off a list as well as I
20 can. Heck, New York City is growing like mad
21 because I think, in part, 18 percent of
22 Manhattan is set aside as public open space.
23 And I would argue there's a connection there.

24 Our community's future is tied

1 inextricably to the connection of our natural
2 -- the condition of our natural environment.
3 We have a member of our developer community
4 here with us this afternoon, Mr. Ron Willard,
5 who sells residential homes and residential
6 developments at Smith Mountain Lake. That's
7 helping our growth of our community.

8 What does growth mean for our community?
9 Well, a lot of people think well, the
10 government's just out trying to push for
11 growth, we just want development, development,
12 development. Nothing could be further from
13 the truth.

14 We're the ones who look for
15 sustainability probably more than anyone else
16 around this room because development comes to
17 us with a real sense of cost.

18 How many houses before you're not
19 producing the tax revenue you need to pay for
20 your schools?

21 How many houses or homes come up before
22 you start hitting erosion and soil problems
23 that in our case would threaten economic and
24 the water quality of Smith Mountain Lake?

1 So, there's a strong connection for us.
2 What collaborative conservation means to us is
3 that now the federal government, thanks to
4 Secretary Scarlett's assistance, is coming on
5 board as a partner. And we need that.

6 In local government, our choice is very
7 simple. Do you hire an elementary school
8 teacher or do you hire a fisheries biologist?
9 Both are needs in your community. But I can
10 tell you which one of those is going to win
11 every single time.

12 Thanks to collaborative conservation
13 what it means to us is suddenly the federal
14 government comes out of its silo, it comes off
15 its refuges and offers its expertise and its
16 support to us as we seek to protect and
17 preserve our local waters, our local
18 endangered critters.

19 One of the things we have in our
20 community that a lot of people are not
21 familiar with because it's not a charismatic

22 megaphonum but is the Roanoke Logperch, a
23 little critter about this big. Very, very
24 neat critter and very endangered.

1 However, it's very easy for folks to
2 want to go ahead and call that the next Bruno
3 Sand Snail or a Darter or something.

4 What we need to do as a community is get
5 beyond that and recognize the health of that
6 endangered critter relates directly to the
7 health of our economy.

8 If the water that that critter needs to
9 survive isn't healthy, the water our folks
10 need to drink or to swim in isn't healthy,
11 then that hurts my job when I'm recruiting new
12 businesses in.

13 We thank Secretary Scarlett for her
14 participation and support of Virginia Racer.
15 Where is it going to go? Well, we hope it's
16 part of a dialogue between our citizens, our
17 communities and our non-profit groups to help
18 inspire more people to take action on their
19 land. We also hope it's a voluntary program.

20 The heavy handed government is not the
21 solution in a rural community where 90 percent
22 of our land is owned by private landowners.

23 Our better mission is get to the heart
24 of each individual where conservation begins

1 and inspire them to make the changes and see
2 the benefits that conservation will bring to
3 not only their children, but also their
4 community.

5 That's the close for my remarks. I do
6 want to thank Mr. Ward Burton and it goes
7 without saying his involvement, his commitment
8 to Southside Virginia means everything. I

9 said this up in Loudon County I think a couple
10 of weeks ago. Nothing brings credibility to
11 environmental conservation in Southside
12 Virginia quite like the winner of the Daytona
13 500.

14 Now, we laugh, we laugh, but folks,
15 there's credibility there and there's an
16 honesty there and there's a connection between
17 the land and the people there that can cross
18 all sorts of lands that I can't as an agency
19 head or the Fish and Wildlife service folks is
20 the best they can do is made possible.

21 So, Ward, I thank you for your
22 commitment. We look forward to this dialogue,
23 we look forward to seeing where this
24 initiative is going to take us. I'm excited.

1 It's nice and exciting to see the change of
2 hearts and minds that's occurring in our
3 community and I don't think it's any accident.

4 Last month we announced 100 million
5 dollar project with 160 high tech jobs that
6 came to our community because they saw things
7 like the Pigg River ramble and they saw things
8 like pretty water, good looking air and good
9 looking land and that made us competitive.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. BURTON: Good morning. I don't know
12 how I'm going to follow that talking up.
13 Scott is very passionate as you can see.

14 Thank you, Ms. Scarlett and all of you
15 folks and everybody up here at the Department
16 of Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife
17 Service. You truly can play a huge
18 leadership role in all of our endeavors here
19 and all over the country and we certainly
20 appreciate what you do.

21 This project started as I was a guest
22 speaker on President Bush's cooperative
23 conservation conference in St. Louis. He's
24 only the fourth president in our nation's

1 history -- Theodore Roosevelt being the first
2 one -- to have a cooperative conservation
3 conference.

4 Out of that we learned a lot of things.
5 We learned a lot about how private
6 individuals, private companies, the Department
7 of Interior can play a leadership role in
8 coming together as a group to create positive
9 missions for our natural resources.

10 At the same time, what I learned in that
11 conference is we were missing some things. We
12 were learning some things about how we were
13 saving 300,000 acres. In Virginia, we don't
14 have 300,000 acres in one spot. We're lucky
15 if we can find a thousand acres.

16 So, we have to figure out ways to do
17 grassroots efforts. That was the part that I
18 am most concerned with. This is a grassroots
19 effort issue, initiative.

20 The Virginia Racer can help save an
21 endangered species, to take a power dam down
22 that is, at best, stagnant. It's got some
23 dangers. It's providing no power. It's
24 privately owned, believe that or not, on a

1 state water which is almost inconceivable.

2 There are some negatives, too. But
3 together we can make all of it a positive.

4 The other thing I learned in the
5 cooperative conservation meeting in no
6 negative tone is we are not doing a good job
7 in reaching the next generation about our
8 natural resources. Our rural culture is
9 changing, and it's changing quick.

10 There are not sustainable farms
11 available now. The commodities are dying.
12 The tobacco buy-out, we haven't even seen what
13 the long-term consequences of that is. That
14 was our last sustaining family farm commodity.

15 So, we've got a nature deficit disorder
16 group coming through that are supposed to be,
17 without our support, our leaders of our
18 natural resources in the next generation.

19 In the next ten or 15 years we're going
20 to start losing all of that because we don't
21 have people like Lynn Scarlett, David
22 Whitehurst with the Game Department being
23 leaders for us. The Scott Martins in the
24 world who cares about the development of

1 Franklin County, but he also cares about the
2 Pigg River.

3 So, we've got to figure out grassroots
4 nationwide efforts to connect our children so
5 that we're having conferences like this and
6 one them is going to be the President who
7 maybe next time will have a cooperative
8 conservation discussion and have these
9 initiatives going on. That's what I'm really
10 concerned about, is our culture is changing
11 quick and in some ways it's not for the best.

12 If we don't serve as leaderships and
13 come together as leaders in our inherited
14 responsibility to take care of our natural
15 resources, what worse crime can we do as
16 adults to leave a message for our children.

17 Now, we together can make a difference.
18 And I hope today that we can figure out a way
19 to move our local initiative forward which is
20 Virginia Racer so together that partnership
21 can become strong and in time we can do even
22 bigger and better things together. Thanks.

23 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you, Ward and
24 Scott, for your efforts and also for taking

1 the time to be with us here today.

2 We're now on to the part of the program
3 that you all are here for in addition to the
4 wonderful presentation and that is for us to
5 turn from speakers to listeners and to invite
6 you up.

7 Just to reiterate the process that we're
8 going to go through, and you all should have
9 gotten a card when you came through that has a
10 bunch of information along with a number on
11 it, we're going to just start with number one
12 and ask you to come up to the microphone and
13 if you can kind of cue yourself up if you're
14 number two, if you can just kind of move up
15 here when number one's up here, that'll help
16 us move through the process.

17 Please, when you come up to the
18 microphone if you could tell us your name,
19 spell your last name for us if it's difficult
20 to spell, where you're from, if you're
21 representing an organization what that
22 organization might be.

23 As I mentioned, we are not going to have
24 time -- a lot of time, so we're going to ask

1 that you would limit your comments to about
2 two and a-half minutes. I'll kind of just
3 subtly wave this card when you've got to your
4 two and a-half minutes and you have about 30
5 more seconds after that. So three minutes,
6 three minutes total.

7 Unfortunately, the size of the room
8 maybe doesn't allow us to have a question and
9 answer give-and-take kind of sessions so we
10 won't be able to take questions or have
11 give-and-take, but as I mentioned, there are
12 the people on the podium as well as the other
13 people we pointed out are going to be here at
14 breaks and after the meeting so if you have
15 specific questions.

16 There are also -- if you don't want to
17 comment publicly today you can sure do that
18 via a fax, the fax number is on there, go
19 on-line and send it in via the website or mail
20 in comments.

21 As I mentioned, I apologize in advance
22 if I have to hurry you along or have to get us
23 back on topic, but I'd don't anticipate that
24 being a problem.

1 So with that, I'd like to start with
2 number one.

3 MR. MCKENNON: Good morning. Bill
4 McKennon, Executive Secretary of the Virginia
5 Cattlemen's Association.

6 THE FACILITATOR: Hold on, Bill. Just
7 one second. Are you able to hear okay?

8

9 (Off the record.)

10

11 MR. MCKENNON: Good morning. My name is
12 Bill McKennon. I'm the Executive Secretary of
13 the Virginia Cattlemen's Association. I live
14 in Christiansburg, Virginia.

15 Nationally, the cattle industry is often
16 challenged by regulations stemming from the
17 environmental -- excuse me -- the Endangered
18 Species Act.

19 Of course, the ESA can have dramatic
20 impact upon both private and federal land
21 issues. In too many cases the regulation
22 enforcement appears to be an all or nothing
23 situation.

24 And we realize that the conservation of

1 wildlife is a desirable goal. After all, we
2 as cattle producers are animal people, we're
3 outside every day, and we know the livestock
4 can exist with many species of wildlife.

5 The decisions impacting specific species
6 listing and delisting should only be made when
7 there are sound data to support that
8 decision.

9 If individuals and business operations
10 are going to be impacted by ESA regulations,
11 there should be empirical information for
12 doing so. Peer review science should be used
13 to support management decisions.

14 In many sections of the country
15 livestock producers take issue with
16 establishing protective wildlife populations
17 as the means of species recovery, particularly
18 with predators.

19 We think recovery plans that focus upon
20 limiting threats to those target species are
21 more realistic.

22 Along the same line, delisting species
23 should not depend upon reestablishing that
24 species and all support portions of the

1 territory in which they once ranged.

2 Trying to reintroduce a species to its
3 entire former range just simply fails to
4 lack -- fails to acknowledge reality.

5 And though preservation of threatened
6 species is important, management's decisions
7 should also consider impacts upon local
8 economies, traditions and alternative
9 resources.

10 In Virginia, the issue of wetlands
11 regulations and their impact upon private
12 property rights may be of more local concern.

13 Much of the land technically classified
14 as wetlands would not be considered wetlands
15 by the average citizen driving by. Yet over
16 zealous federal regulations of such can render
17 the landowner's property useless and
18 dramatically impact the farming operation's
19 financial situation.

20 Farmers consistently have an
21 appreciation for the need to carefully manage
22 soils which may have seasonal drainage
23 problems. Therefore, we would ask for a
24 formal ruling process to clarify the

1 jurisdiction of EPA in regard to isolated
2 wetlands.

3 Realize that farmers and ranchers make
4 their living off land and appreciate the good
5 stewardship and well-being of those resources
6 through their economic well-being as well as
7 the rest. We appreciate the opportunity.

8 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number
9 two.

10 MR. CAPEL: My name is Steven Capel.
11 I'm a farm and wildlife supervisor for the
12 Virginia Department of Game and Inland
13

13 Fisheries. I've been a wildlife biologist. I
14 worked in Kansas and Virginia for about 43
15 years and over that time I have seen some
16 great improvements in the farm programs that
17 we have.

18 I think we, at this point, we have a
19 great suite of farm programs that are
20 available to the landowners and to all of the
21 conservationists that are working to improve
22 our countryside.

23 There may be a few areas that need some
24 tweaking along the line but, basically, we've

1 got a good suite of programs.

2 The State Technical Committee is just
3 one very excellent example, a great example of
4 cooperative conservation. They have done some
5 great things in pulling a diverse group of
6 folks together and providing advice to the
7 NRCS leadership and helping to develop
8 programs that seem to meet just about
9 everybody's needs very smoothly.

10 I think that's a great touch, and it's
11 the kind of thing that helps us move along
12 very smoothly.

13 Some of the areas I think that we could
14 use some improvement on is the lead time.
15 When a program is announced to when it's
16 implemented is often a very short time period
17 and it does not allow for the cooperative
18 effort to come into play.

19 A new sign-up for CRP or whatever the
20 program is comes out and boom, ten days later
21 the FSA office is accepting applications
22 without the chance for even getting together
23 to develop the formative program. And that's
24 as much of an issue for the field offices and

1 the field personnel of the USDA as it is
2 anyone.

3 One of the things that has been an issue
4 here in Virginia, and I think that probably is
5 in some other areas is the cutting rate on the
6 national forests.

7 We have seen the -- it almost declined
8 to non-existence. And number of species that
9 rely on the successional stages of the forest
10 are declining dramatically. Those are -- that
11 is actually the group of species that is in
12 most significant decline.

13 And that does not mean that protecting
14 and being careful about the old growth issues
15 and those units in the forest that support and
16 are potentially at or close to an old growth
17 status shouldn't be protected, but the cutting
18 to improve things for the successional species
19 would be an important aspect.

20 One of the things that's coming along in
21 the near future is this 3,000 pound gorilla
22 and not an 800 pound gorilla called
23 alternative energy. And we've got some things
24 that are going on.

1 The Department of Energy has done a
2 great job preparing from their standpoint, but
3 we have virtually no knowledge about the BTU's
4 and the chemical content and the sulfur and
5 chlorine of a lot of the fuels that might
6 potentially be there.

7 We've done it for Switchgrass, but we
8 need to do it for Big Loose Stemmed Indian
9 Grass and some of the others that are out
10 there in the mixtures that have been planted
11 on CRP lands and that sort of thing.

12 Also, from a wildlife standpoint, if
13 we're going to accumulate fuels and go to some
14 alternate year harvesting and that sort of
15 thing, we need to know what the percentage of
16 loss is.

17 The landowner needs to know the
18 percentage that will be lost if they stockpile
19 after two years because they'll have to be
20 compensated or we'll have to recognize that
21 that's offset by the cost of only year of
22 harvest.

23 So, those are some of the things in
24 alternative energy that would be very helpful

1 and they're not expensive research aspects.

2 THE FACILITATOR: Number three.

3 MS. ALLIGOOD: Good morning. I'm
4 Jennifer Alligood I'm from Cantina, North
5 Carolina, and I'm Chairman of the grassroots
6 organization, North Carolinians who oppose the
7 Outlying Landing Field in Eastern North
8 Carolina.

9 In September of 2003 the Navy made a
10 decision to place a touch-and-go landing field
11 in the outlying landing field otherwise known
12 as the OLF in Washington and Beaufort
13 Counties. This field would support both
14 Virginia's Oceana and North Carolina's Cherry
15 Point.

16 The OLF required a combination of 50
17 square miles of productive farmland. It would
18 destroy over 100 generational homes and farms,
19 demean the quality of life for thousands of
20 people and significantly it would endanger the
21 lives of private civilians and wildlife since
22 it would be located within the feeding area of
23 the Pocosin Lake's National Wildlife Refuge, a
24 wintering home for hundreds of thousands of

1 Tundra Swans, Snow Geese and ducks.

2 For the last two years the Pocosin Lake
3 was listed on the top ten endangered wildlife
4 refuges out of the 545 that are in the

5 protection of the Department of Interior.

6 The citizens of Washington and Beaufort
7 County refuse to accept this outcome and our
8 best efforts to work with the state and
9 federal agents, we were forward to go to
10 Court.

11 The courts determined that the original
12 EIS was deficient. The Navy is now preparing
13 a court ordered supplemental EIS and will
14 release it shortly.

15 Every indication is that the Navy plans
16 to make the same decision and begin condemning
17 land and mitigating the birds which in their
18 terms say they will use lethal means if they
19 have to.

20 Our region is a classic example of
21 cooperative conservation which is today's
22 topic. Our waterfowl rest on the Tundra Lake,
23 feed on the farm fields west of the refuge
24 where the proposed OLF site is located.

1 The farmers support this refuge by
2 leaving grains in the field for birds since
3 the refuge itself is not providing food.

4 This practice has been going on since
5 the beginning of our country before it was
6 established.

7 This package that we will give to you
8 will list over 100 organizations opposing the
9 OLF. These organizations represent millions
10 of people nationwide from both sides of the
11 political line.

12 Never before has such a diverse group
13 tried to work cooperatively for conservation
14 with the federal government only to be
15 ignored.

16 It is the goal of the No OLF to work
17 cooperatively with the Navy in finding
18 suitable alternative sites for the OLF. There
19 are dozens of alternative sites, military,
20 federal land as well as the area endorsed by
21 our governor.

22 As Interior Secretary Kempthorne was not
23 involved in the original decision concerning
24 the placement of the OLF, we feel he and the

1 other agencies now have a window of
2 opportunity to come forward and proactively
3 resolve this issue to the satisfaction of our
4 country and our environment.

5 I thank you for your time.

6 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.

7 SPEAKER: Can we figure out a way to get
8 this thing boosted a little bit? I didn't
9 hear a lot of --

10

11 (Off the record.)

12

13 THE FACILITATOR: Go ahead number four.

14 MS. ARMSTRONG: I'm Francis Armstrong.
15 I'm from Bath, North Carolina. I'm also here
16 representing the No OLF, and I'm here because
17 of the U.S. Navy's proposed Outlying Landing
18 Field, OLF, in Washington and Beaufort
19 Counties on the Albemarle-Pamlico Peninsula in
20 Northeastern North Carolina.

21 This OLF site should not have been
22 considered, selected or now continue to be
23 pursued. The Navy's initial OLF site
24 screening criteria was to avoid public

1 interest areas and that includes wildlife
2 refuges and this site is adjacent to globally
3 significant Pocosin Lake National Wildlife
4 Refuge.

5 If you visited this area, you would
6 realize that this is not the place for low
7 flying aircraft and you would see cooperative
8 conservation in action.

9 The people in the area care for and
10 about the migratory birds and look forward to
11 their arrival in late fall.

12 The generational farm families in the
13 area have a deep respect and love for the land
14 and the wildlife. The farm fields west of the
15 refuge where the proposed OLF site is located
16 is prime farmland. It's called black lands
17 and it's especially productive for grain
18 crops.

19 The farmers leave the grain in the
20 fields for the birds and they welcome to their
21 fields. Pungo Lake on the refuge is the
22 resting place for the birds but does not
23 provide food so the grain and winter wheat are
24 very important for the well-being of the

1 birds.

2 The birds, at times, fly the fields over
3 25 miles away. The birds rest, feed and fly
4 so that they will be in peak condition to make
5 the long flight back to the summer breeding
6 grounds in Northern Alaska and Northern
7 Canada. The birds even find favorable food in
8 the weeds where cotton was planted.

9 The Navy said the BASH, which is the
10 Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard risk, is
11 manageable at this site. If the OLF is
12 constructed here, the Navy's BASH plan will
13 ultimately require that all crop production
14 cease in the entire area.

15 Farming is our heritage but farmland and
16 family farmers are disappearing across our
17 nation along with natural wildlife areas.

18 The Albemarle-Pamlico Peninsula is one
19 of the last pristine areas on the East Coast
20 and it is vital to protect the family farmers,
21 farmland, wildlife and wildlife refuges in
22 this area.

23 This book was written in 1709 by John
24 Lawson. It documents these birds have been

1 coming to this area for hundreds of years.

2 I live in Bath which is a town that
3 celebrated its 300th birthday last year. The
4 refuge was established for wildlife. It's a
5 wildlife sanctuary. And Navy, if they put the
6 OLF here, will wipe out the birds and wipe out
7 the reason and the purpose for this refuge.
8 Thank you.

9 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number
10 five. Number six. Number seven. Eight.

11 MR. CRIGGER: I'm Albert Crigger with
12 the Virginia Rural Water Association and I'm
13 their Source Water Specialist. I help protect
14 drinking water resources.

15 And in my opinion what we need to do is
16 sort of what Mr. Burton touched on is try to
17 focus on the younger generation.

18 Right now we're kind of in the computer
19 age and a lot of the small kids that we have
20 today, they don't experience the outdoors.
21 They're mainly tied to computers and video
22 games and I think they need to be taken out
23 into the great outdoors and just experience
24 hands-on what's out there and available for

1 them. Otherwise, I think that we're kind of
2 missing the boat in that aspect.

3 I also feel that public education is
4 something that we need to focus on more. I
5 know as a small child one thing that kind of
6 steered me towards the path I took in my
7 career is a public service announcement with
8 the Indian crying. Very, very powerful. And
9 I think that really drives home a lot of the
10 conservation issues that we're facing.

11 As far as how the federal government and
12 state and local agencies can better exchange
13 information and communicate, I see this a lot
14 in my work. I'll have a meeting and maybe
15 have three or four different agency people
16 there and they don't know what each other are
17 doing. They don't have the ways and means to
18 communicate with each other.

19 So, I feel like having an open session
20 roundtable with the federal government and
21 some of these state and local agencies would
22 allow for the exchange of ideas and
23 information whereas right now that's like a
24 missing bridge.

1 I also feel that the cost share
2 programs, especially some of those that the
3 USDA has is very, very beneficial right now,
4 especially the conservation of their
5 enhancement program.

6 I try to push that a whole lot in
7 dealing with surface waters for buffer strips.
8 It's a really good program and I commend you
9 for that, and I hope to see that program
10 continue into the future and I'd like to see
11 other programs similar to it.

12 Along the same lines, I think one of the
13 things that we may need to focus on in the
14 future is suburban and urban best management
15 practices.

16 We've put a lot of money and a lot of
17 effort into agricultural best management
18 practices, but yet there's very little
19 education and money involved where suburban
20 and urban best management practices.

21 That's all I have.

22 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number
23 nine. Eight.

24 MS. EASTER: I'm Jackie Easter. I'm the

1 State Executive Director for the --

2 SPEAKER: Could you come over here? We
3 can hear you so much better over here. I'm
4 sorry.

5 MS. EASTER: Good morning. I'm Jackie
6 Easter. I'm the State Executive Director for
7 the Virginia Farm Service Agency and I'm proud
8 that you would be here in Virginia.

9 I am also a Southside Virginia girl born
10 and raised in Amelia County. I'm a fifth
11 generation farmer on our family farm.

12 I would like in particular to remind
13 Mr. Martin and Mr. Burton that Farm Service
14 Agency is an example of that grassroots that
15 you pointed out beginning with our county
16 committees that are elected by the local areas
17 and going all the way up to our state
18 committee.

19 We do thank you for being here and look
20 forward to continuing working with those
21 partnerships.

22 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number
23 nine. Ten.

24 MR. CUTLER: Good morning. I'm Rupert

1 Cutler of Roanoke, a board member of the
2 Western Virginia Water Authority. I was a
3 member the Roanoke City Council and I'm the
4 former Assistant Secretary for Natural
5 Resources and Environment of the U.S.
6 Department of Agriculture.

7 I speak in support of a proposed
8 federal, state, local endangered species
9 conservation partnership project within the
10 City of Roanoke proposed by the U.S. Fish and
11 Wildlife Service.

12 The Virginia Department of Game and
13 Inland Fisheries, the Western Virginia Water
14 Authority and the City of Roanoke would be
15 partners.

16 FLUS proposes to eliminate a sewer line
17 crossing of the Roanoke River above Wasena
18 Park that appears to be a dam.

19 The sewer crossing is a barrier between
20 two communities of the Roanoke Logperch, an
21 endangered species whose prospects for
22 survival have been improved by the
23 implementation of the Endangered Species Act
24 for which we are thankful.

1 Removal of the sewer crossing would
2 increase subsequent transport, allow periodic
3 scouring of the river bottom, cleaning the
4 Logperch's habitat and increase genetic
5 diversity by allowing the now separate
6 populations of Logperch to interact.

7 The Roanoke Logperch Recovery Plan
8 approved by the Regional Director of the U.S.
9 Fish and Wildlife Service on March 20, 1992,
10 describes the Logperch as intolerant of silt
11 and substrates. The subject proposal
12 addresses this habitat problem of silt
13 accumulation.

14 While the Western Virginia Water
15 Authority would like the Fish and Wildlife
16 Service to do more studying to be sure the
17 existing sewer line causes irritation and ripple
18 benefits are considered.

19 We certainly support the goal of a
20 long-term population increase of this native
21 species. Thus, I urge that federal -- I urge
22 the federal support be given to the Roanoke
23 Logperch Partnership Habitat Improvement
24 Project in the City of Roanoke proposed by the

1 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

2 On other fronts, I'd recommend the
3 following. Support the Endangered Species Act
4 as is. Do not limit protection areas. Make
5 it harder to list a species or require
6 landowner compensation for private land
7 included in protective habitat zones. Support
8 wildlife state planning for transportation
9 corridors that gives the nation energy
10 conservation opportunities such as moving
11 freight from trucks to trains.

12 Support favorable tax code treatment of
13 conservation easements.

14 Increase incentives for private
15 landowners to donate and develop the rights to
16 protect wildlife habitat and other open space,
17 a less expensive and intrusive alternative to
18 federal land acquisition.

19 Support full funding of the land and
20 water conservation involving an allocation in
21 part to local governments to help them acquire
22 and improve its parks and greenway trails
23 rights-of-way.

24 And, finally, September 3 will mark the

1 42nd anniversary of the signing the Wilderness
2 Act and there remain many focus areas on
3 Virginia's natural forests that Senator John
4 Warner and I believe should be added to the
5 wilderness system by Congress.

6 Thank you.

7 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number
8 ten. Eleven.

9 MS. BOOTHE: My name is Linda Boothe. I
10 grew up in this area in Vinton, Virginia. I
11 went to the Roanoke County Public Schools and
12 to Longwood College and the University of
13 Virginia. I've lived in Virginia my entire
14 life.

15 I'm here today to represent the National
16 Audubon Society, and we very much appreciate
17 your reaching out to the public to discuss
18 these important issues and for providing this
19 public forum.

20 I do have to express a little concern
21 about comments that you want to learn how the
22 federal government can enhance cooperative
23 conservation with businesses and landowners.
24 I hope you broaden that to the general public

1 at large and I'm sure you meant that, and
2 particularly to non-landowners and
3 conservational organizations that are working
4 very hard on these issues.

5 We believe that the Endangered Species
6 Act and other federal conservation laws have
7 been very effective at bringing people
8 together and encouraging cooperative
9 conservation and we appreciate what you're
10 doing, but cooperative conservation should not
11 be a substitute for enforcement of the current
12 Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act and
13 the Water Act and other federal conservation
14 laws.

15 We urge you to oppose the efforts
16 currently in Congress to weaken the Endangered
17 Species Act. We believe that it has been
18 successful. It's not perfect, but it has been
19 successful in preventing extinction for 99
20 percent of species listed as endangered or
21 threatened and those are the U.S. Fish and
22 Wildlife Service statistics.

23 According to Fish and Wildlife Service,
24 68 percent of listed species are stable or

1 improving.

2 In terms of the Endangered Species Act,
3 it's important to reflect on and focus on the
4 underlying purpose of preventing extinction
5 and why that is important.

6 The noted scientist Edwin Wilson, who
7 many of you probably have read, has said that
8 we really only know about ten percent of all
9 species.

10 And when we destroy a species, we are
11 not just destroying nature, but we are also
12 destroying the genetic potential that that
13 represents.

14 One-fourth of our prescriptions, our
15 medical prescriptions that we use today in
16 this country were based on substances derived
17 from natural products. So, this is very
18 practical implication of the importance of
19 this law.

20 And we believe that best way to protect
21 species is to protect habitat. And today,
22 extinction rates, we believe, are accelerating
23 and not so much as in former centuries by
24 hunting and other exploitation, but by the

1 destruction of habitat. Habitat loss
2 threatens 85 percent of all endangered species
3 and animals.

4 So, this law has been in effect for 33
5 years and our message today is to please
6 enforce the Endangered Species Act to prevent
7 extinction and do not support efforts to
8 weaken that law.

9 Thank you.

10 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number 12.
11 Thirteen. Fourteen. Thirteen, okay.

12 MS. BLANKENSHIP: As usual, I need a
13 stool. My name is Joan Blankenship. I am
14 President of the Virginia Bass Federation now
15 referred to as the Bass Federation Nation in
16 Virginia.

17 Everybody knows that we bring
18 tournaments to lakes and lots of traffic, but
19 what you don't know is that we run a very
20 active youth program and we also are very
21 active in conservation projects.

22 One of the reasons that I'm speaking and
23 wasn't prepared to, but I wanted you to be
24 aware that we are very interesting --

1 interested in partnering and under the
2 direction of Noreen Clough who is the
3 Conservation Director for Bass and ESPN and
4 Chris Horton who is her partner, we have got
5 extra funding through Bass and ESPN this year
6 and so for Ward and Scott, we're more than
7 interested in working with Virginia on both
8 education and conservation projects.

9 It's a whole paradigm shift for us and
10 we really want to be good stewards of the
11 lakes. We're interested in habitat
12 restoration and we do have the funding to do
13 that.

14 So, that's why I'm speaking to you
15 today. And you will probably hear a lot more
16 from us. And I also see Ward quite often at
17 Game and Inland Fisheries meetings so we're
18 hoping to be good stewards.

19 Thank you for coming here. You're only
20 45 minutes from Henry County which is where I
21 come from. And I'm going to be spending a lot
22 of time up in Washington on the Potomac in
23 September and on Smith Mountain Lake in
24 October. So, look forward to working with

1 you.

2 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number 14.

3 SPEAKER: Madam Secretary, Members of
4 the Panel -- Mr. Case, I expect our friendship
5 to give me at least ten more seconds.

6 THE FACILITATOR: Time's up.

7 SPEAKER: Thanks for being here. It's
8 really an honor to have you all here and to
9 have you back in our state for a second time.

10 I'm here today to talk to you about
11 several programs. First of all, the statewide
12 program that I know that Deputy Secretary
13 Scarlett is a champion of.

14 This program started in 2001. By 2005
15 it had produced state wildlife action plans in
16 all 50 states and six provinces. These plans
17 have been very well done. They are very
18 specific for each state. And I would
19 encourage you to make these plans -- integrate
20 them into your agencies under your control at
21 the federal level.

22 The Department of Interior is doing a
23 great job of that and they'll call the
24 Director of Fish and Wildlife Services given

1 River drainage and the Shenandoah River
2 drainage and now in the Roanoke River drainage
3 to try to improve habitats and are using it
4 especially for the Virginia Racer project.

5 We will be using -- we just hired a
6 hydrogeologist to work with landowners in
7 the Roanoke River drainage.

8 And to show you what partnerships can
9 do, just think, if we start having meetings,
10 landowner meetings with Ward Burton at the
11 meeting, do you think the landowners in
12 Southside Virginia will come and listen to
13 Ward Burton?

14 I think they will and once we start
15 those meetings, we'll need more help because
16 there will be more landowners wanting to do
17 the right things for wildlife.

18 I see I'm out of time already. The
19 Partners in Wildlife program, those types of
20 programs are extremely important. Continue
21 those.

22 Energy development, we understand that
23 we need to develop alternate forms of energy.
24 Please use the science and give us enough time

1 to develop the environment and wildlife
2 impacts are to those forms of development so
3 that we can avoid those or ameliorate those.

4 Finally, let's connect generations to
5 wildlife and nature. If we don't, we're going
6 to lose something that's very value.

7 In this society, we protect what's
8 valuable. If the next generation does not
9 understand the value of our wildlife and
10 natural resources, they will not be protected.

11 So, please do what you can to make those
12 connections and pass those things along.

13 Thank you.

14 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you, David.
15 Number 15.

16 MR. WERLE: Chris Werle, and it's
17 W-E-R-L-E. I'm with the Albemarle Government
18 Consulting and I'm here representing the U.S.
19 Army Environmental Center in Aberdeen,
20 Maryland, and the Army Compatible Use Buffers
21 Program.

22 I really don't have a formal statement.
23 I'm really here primarily as an observer on
24 behalf of AEC.

1 However, just a couple of comments for
2 those who may not be familiar with the ACUB
3 Program. It's Army Compatible Use Buffers.

4 It's now going into its third year of
5 implementation by the Army. And through the
6 ACUB Program, Army installations have the
7 opportunity to partner with the state and
8 local governments, private non-profit
9 conservation organizations and local
10 landowners to jointly establish conservation
11 buffers around Army installations in our
12 country.

13 We think this has been very successful
14 so far. It creates a win-win situation with
15 the parties that are involved by supporting
16 public conservation efforts, the landowners
17 and for the Army in particular, it insures
18 that the land around the Army installation
19 perimeter won't be developed or used for
20 anything that's incompatible with the
21 installation. So, that's in a nutshell what
22 it's all about.

23 Again, it's been very successful. If
24 you'd like to learn more about the program,

1 I've brought some copies of the Army's FY05
2 annual report with me and some brochures and
3 some other things and I'm certainly willing to
4 talk to folks on-line. Thank you.

5 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Sixteen.

6 MS. LINSKI: My name is Tammy Linski.
7 I'm from Copper Hill, Virginia, over there up
8 on the mountain. And I work for a non-profit
9 environmental law firm called Wild Law. And
10 in order to avoid -- I would echo the
11 sentiments of Mr. Rupert Cutler and the woman
12 representing Audubon. I would repeat those if
13 I had more time.

14 In regard to how the federal government
15 can enhance wildlife habitats, we need
16 protection under an obligation outcome through
17 regulatory and voluntary conservation
18 programs.

19 I'd offer to you, let the U.S. Fish and
20 Wildlife Service just do its job. The
21 program, the Racer Program is an excellent
22 example of cooperative conservation.

23 They are lucky to have their canary in
24 their streams in Roanoke County, so are the

1 Roanoke Logperch and I'm glad that they've
2 come to appreciate the intrinsic value of that
3 species.

4 However, that watershed is also
5 threatened by a proposed interstate highway
6 that the decision is in the process of being
7 made.

8 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has
9 recommended against preferred alternatives and
10 would like to see a road improvement rather
11 than a new construction through green space in
12 order to conserve that species which
13 apparently great resources are being expended
14 in order to protect.

15 Listen to your experts. Listen to the
16 specialists. Talk to the people on the
17 ground. As a former regulator myself, please
18 listen to the people who do your work.

19 In the area of national forest
20 management, I'd offer to you that a good way
21 to enhance your efforts would be to terminate
22 the timber quota program and instead charge
23 your resource managers with acreage restored.
24 Count acreage restored instead of timber cut.

1 Your example of the Chestnut is the
2 great divide between us in that the Chestnut
3 was, indeed, a great tree, but it was also the
4 keystone for the forest, the forest community,
5 the forest and the trees.

6 And third, something that isn't talked
7 about, we talked about incentives for
8 conservation. I would ask you all to take a
9 look at the tax code and take the
10 disincentives for conservation out of the tax
11 code. I have a third year law paper that I
12 could give you. It's already six years old or
13 seven years old, but somebody could update it
14 for you.

15 Cooperation, how can you enhance
16 cooperation? Make environmental protection a
17 priority.

18 How do children learn best? They learn
19 by example. We have not made conservation a
20 priority since the day that we had that great
21 public service announcement on the television.

22 THE FACILITATOR: Time's up.

23 MS. LINSKI: Thank you.

24 THE FACILITATOR: Number 17. Eighteen.

1 MS. GELLER: Hi, I'm Maggie Geller for
2 National Cattlemen's Association. I was born
3 and raised in the mountains from here so I
4 appreciate this opportunity.

5 We really appreciate the support of the
6 administration that we've had thus far for
7 cattlemen recognizing that we're stewards and
8 maintainers of open space across the country.

9 The greatest is maintaining the open --
10 and working landscapes of the cattlemen.
11 Naturally, they would have many of our
12 interests and so we appreciate that support
13 from the administration.

14 There are a couple of things we can
15 continue to need your help on. One is
16 Endangered Species Act implementation
17 regulations that I understand Ms. Scarlett has
18 spent a lot of time and we're really looking
19 forward to the release of those regs.

20 Another is that we would request formal
21 rule-making for isolated waters for the EPA
22 and the Corps to give better certainty,
23 regulatory certainty to people with isolated
24 wetlands.

1 The other is continued support of
2 non-public land. So, we really appreciate the
3 support we've had from both the Department of
4 Interior and the USDA in this area, and we hope
5 to continue to work with you for
6 administrative initiatives for great things.
7 So, that's all. Thank you.

8 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number 18.
9 Nineteen.

10 MS. BICKEL: Good morning. My name is
11 Jody Bickel and I'm a citizen of Montgomery
12 County, a member of New River Valley Trails
13 which is a regional trails advocacy group.
14 I'm a student of governance and a future
15 farmer.

16 While I dare say it's easy to support
17 the concept of cooperative conservation, I'd
18 like to encourage active attention to the
19 realities of the changing nature of the
20 relationships between the public, private and
21 non-profit sectors.

22 Partnering for environmental
23 conservation purposes brings with it the
24 responsibilities to reconfigure related

1 policies and appropriately redistribute
2 associated responsibilities of resources.

3 Concerted effort must be given to
4 develop and appropriate relationships with
5 non-profit organizations and private
6 foundations as a means of achieving
7 cooperative conservation across the country
8 with the expected outcome of fostering
9 long-term interstitial relationships and
10 ultimately sound environment.

11 So, I'd like to challenge our agencies,
12 as well as the public to further develop and
13 discuss these ideas in relation to this issue.
14 Thank you.

15 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Twenty.
16 Nineteen. Okay.

17 MS. SCHNITZER: Hi, my name is Marcy
18 Schnitzer and I'm a native of Blacksburg,
19 Virginia. Some people think there's nobody
20 actually born there.

21 But, anyway, I am a trained
22 environmental mediator and recently completed
23 training with the Virginia Institute For
24 Environmental Negotiations.

1 And I wanted to put in a plug -- I know
2 there's already been in this but I wanted to
3 put in a further plug for good process in
4 cooperative conservation.

5 Many people I know who are environmental
6 mediators are nowhere involved in the initial
7 cooperative conservation conference.

8 But like Mr. Burton, I'm really
9 concerned about grassroots and particularly
10 people who are not often determined as
11 legitimate by virtue of their lack of
12 affiliation with an organization, by virtue of
13 their education or by virtue of their economic
14 status.

15 And a good mediator or a good
16 facilitator can safeguard that through good

17 state-holder development processes as well as
18 respect and wisdom of the publics through
19 joint fact-finding initiatives.

20 So, I'm really -- again, would like for
21 that to be known that we care about those
22 issues in this region as well. Thank you.

23 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Twenty.
24 Number 21.

1 MS. GRIFFITH: Hello. My name is Rita
2 Griffith and I'm a County Commissioner in West
3 Virginia in Pocahontas County and I'm also a
4 member of the public land steering committee
5 for the National Association of Counties.

6 I just left the national conference so
7 pardon -- I was in a rush to get here.

8 I want to encourage the continued
9 collaboration that's been going on with the
10 National Endangered Species Act Reform
11 Coalition. I know that several of our
12 agencies have been working with members of
13 that on the Hill. I appreciate that very
14 much.

15 We need to encourage timely action to
16 update and improve the Endangered Species Act
17 that will make it easier for landowners,
18 businesses, local governments and
19 organizations to protect a species.

20 And we have to respect the needs of
21 private property owners while we're
22 encouraging this collaborative conservation so
23 that ultimately we'll be able to work together
24 to protect species.

1 I want to echo Mr. Martin's earlier
2 remarks about making programs more voluntary
3 rather than just regulatory.

4 When listing species, specifically when
5 we're listing species, there should be
6 recovery and delisting objectives or goals
7 that are outlined when you list a species.

8 We need to also streamline the HCP,
9 Habitat Conservation Plans, the development.
10 That needs to be streamlined in the approval
11 process to avoid any kind of excessive
12 preparation costs and development time for the
13 permits.

14 We could possibly develop permits model
15 agreements that could be used on smaller
16 projects. An example in my county is one
17 particular business owner had to wait two
18 years and it cost him a little over 30,000
19 dollars before he could build his business.
20 And I really just -- I don't want it to be
21 who's got the most money and the deepest
22 pockets as to who builds businesses in my
23 county.

24 Lastly, I'd like to add that we maintain

1 and strengthen the no surprises insurance
2 policy so that citizens and organizations can
3 comply with the act more efficiently.

4 That when changes do have to occur in
5 government, and I know we do have those, that
6 it's an open, sound and transparent process
7 for how those changes came about.

8 And thank you very much for the
9 opportunity to speak and for having these
10 listening sessions.

11 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.

12 Twenty-two.

13 MR. MODER: Good morning. My name is
14 Ron Moder, II and I'm here today as a
15 builder/developer and also from Smith Mountain
16 Lake, Virginia. That's where I do our
17 developments.

18 I'm here on behalf of the Roanoke
19 Regional Home Builders Association and also
20 the National Association of Home Builders.

21 I appreciate this opportunity to comment
22 on cooperative conservation and ways this
23 administration can facilitate better working
24 relationships between federal agencies and

1 private landowners for the purpose of
2 promoting conservation.

3 Enhancing cooperative conservation, the
4 first requirement is addressing the archaic,
5 outdated, ineffective, inefficient regulatory
6 provisions.

7 Indeed, a strong commitment needs to be
8 made to remove barriers to insure
9 collaboration instead of conflict between the
10 agencies and the regulating community.

11 I'd like to touch on three key
12 priorities this administration can take to
13 promote the goals of cooperative conservation
14 with home builders and developers.

15 Under the Endangered Species Act the
16 federal government is authorized to regulate
17 endangered and threatened species and their
18 habitat on private as well as public property.

19 Projects on private property that
20 require other federal permits, wetlands, storm
21 water, etcetera, become subject to ESA section
22 seven consultation process and there again
23 thereby can be modified and pose specific
24 mitigation conditions during the permit

1 process.

2 There are a number of steps the U.S.
3 Wildlife Service and NOAA fishers can take to
4 improve the current regulatory program.

5 Issue common sense standards for key
6 regulatory terms called in question by
7 litigation, specifically adverse modification
8 in gender.

9 Establish critical habitat guidelines to
10 insure an open and consistent designation
11 process that accurately assesses the
12 biological value and habitat of the species of
13 concern.

14 And encourage builders and developers to
15 participate in existing and future habitat
16 conservation plans by exempting all private
17 property enrolled in existing or pending
18 habitat conservation plans from critical
19 habitat.

20 Under the Clean Water Act, the storm
21 water provision, the Environmental Protection
22 Agency has established storm water regulations
23 that are costly, excessive and sometimes
24 inconsistent and duplicate of state and local

1 requirements.

2 Because these regulations are inherently
3 subjective, a builder could spend thousands of
4 dollars on storm water management on every
5 home and still be found in non-compliance by
6 an inspector who disagrees as to the best
7 management practices that should be used.

8 There are a number of steps the EPA and
9 state and federal authorities could take
10 measures in the Clean Water Act and more cost
11 regulation. Develop consistent federal, state
12 enforcement policies, remove duplicate federal
13 permit requirements and develop their own
14 state watershed partnership programs.

15 Under the Clean Water Act wetlands
16 provision requirements measured by the Army
17 Corps of Engineers and the EPA are all
18 arbitrary and onerous.

19 Developers and landowners are all forced
20 into combative rather than cooperative
21 position when navigating permitting process.

22 The EPA -- to conduct rule-making and
23 clarify so areas can legally be regulated
24 under the CWA and reform the wetlands

1 permitting program and focus on wetlands of
2 high ecological value, provide regulatory
3 incentives for landowners who take additional
4 steps to protect wetlands, streamline the
5 permitting process.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
7 today. NEAC looks forward to working with all
8 the federal agencies present here today to
9 achieve the goals of cooperative conservation.
10 Thank you.

11 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
12 Twenty-three. Twenty-four.

13 MR. WALDON: I'm Jack Waldon. I'm the
14 Executive Director of the Conservation
15 Management Institute at Virginia Tech.

16 I've been involved with helping to
17 facilitate the Virginia Racer Partnership,
18 involved in working with the bio-energy
19 initiative here in Virginia and probably half
20 a dozen other I think what you would call
21 cooperative conservation initiatives over the
22 recent years.

23 And the thing that has come to my
24 attention the most is this problem of

1 disconnect between public programs and private
2 landowners.

3 If you're sitting out there as a private
4 landowner, the number of programs from the
5 federal, state and possibly other sources is
6 mind-boggling. There's dozens.

7 Even professionals that I work with on a
8 regular basis struggle with the types of
9 programs and the rules that go with each of
10 them and how they're applying those.

11 I think there's one thing that this
12 cooperative conservation initiative might try
13 to address is to turn around from the top down
14 thinking and try and work with those
15 landowners and look up and see all the
16 different things that are going on and try and
17 simplify that process or program or something
18 along those lines.

19 The second point I want to make is in at
20 least Virginia, farm wildlife is highly
21 dependent on the fact that we have farmers
22 and without some sort of rural development
23 initiative that brings more money and more
24 expertise and more help to those farmers, we

1 aren't going to have farmers to provide
2 habitat for the wildlife.

3 So, I think rural development is a key
4 thing and it fits very nicely with the
5 cooperative conservation initiative.

6 Thank you.

7 THE FACILITATOR: Twenty-five.

8 MR. ROBERTSON: My name is David
9 Robertson. I'm on the faculty at Virginia
10 Tech. And I want to thank you all not only
11 for having this session, but also for having
12 formed a cooperative conservation partnership
13 and keeping it in existence for as long as you
14 have.

15 This time last year a group of
16 landowners from Grayson County, Virginia, came
17 to the College of Natural Resources at
18 Virginia Tech and asked us to work with them
19 to improve the incomes off their land and also
20 improve their land management practices for
21 environmental and other community benefits and
22 so we've continued to work with them for the
23 past year.

24 One of the first challenges we had to

1 realize that as a university and as a college
2 and specifically as departments of forestry
3 and groups in conservation management just
4 mentioned, weren't organized very well to help
5 the landowners in some cases and so we've been
6 struggling to figure out how might we better
7 serve them and work as partners in the future
8 and I think it sounds like it's a similar
9 challenge that you all are working with at the
10 federal level.

11 Since that time, the Grayson County
12 landowners that came to us have formed an
13 organization called Grayson Land Care and
14 since that time, we've helped several other
15 groups in the State of Virginia get to a point
16 where they're forming local land care groups
17 as well.

18 So, we now have a strong and growing
19 local and regional land care movement right
20 here in Virginia.

21 I'd like to thank you because on your
22 website you've highlighted that and on the
23 about page, I'm sure you're aware but there
24 are a number of people here in the room might

1 not be, there are links to two documents.

2 One is titled What is Land Care and
3 another one is an article that came out in a
4 publication of the Society of American
5 Foresters. Both explain land care and also
6 some of the local efforts here.

7 I want to identify one challenge and
8 this has -- that we're facing here and it has
9 to do with funding. And I wanted to address
10 this to you all because I noticed that you're
11 proposing some new legislation and you have
12 four components.

13 I'd like for you to consider at least a
14 fifth. Either how it fits into one of those
15 four or possibly fifth component of
16 legislation and that would be funding for what
17 I would call land care. It could be any
18 variety of names.

19 But the two aspects that it needs to
20 include is funding for facilitation of local
21 groups, community organizers to help those
22 groups form, help them pursue the resources,
23 the great number of resources that are
24 available out there to them, and then the

1 second thing is to provide some local project
2 funding in the forms of grants and in loans
3 because a lot of these are business
4 opportunities that can be created, not just
5 subsidies for federal land management.

6 So, I would encourage you to consider
7 another form of legislation when you consider
8 the others. Thank you.

9 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
10 Twenty-six.

11 MR. DILLON: Good morning. I'm Jay
12 Dillon. I'm from Rockbridge County which is
13 the watershed of the Maury River 50 miles
14 north of here.

15 I'm here to represent the Foundation for
16 Virginia's Natural Resources. It's a new
17 public foundation that was established in the
18 legislative session of 2005. The Board of
19 Trustees was appointed in November of last
20 year. I'm the Chairman.

21 It establishes the Virginia Natural
22 Resources trust fund. Our purpose and our
23 mandate is to foster collaboration and
24 partnerships among businesses, communities in

1 the Commonwealth's environmental enhancement
2 programs.

3 It also establishes Virginia's Natural
4 Resource trust fund. There have been four
5 donations to that trust fund so far totaling
6 14 hundred dollars.

7 The foundation will focus on
8 environmental education, that's K through 12,
9 and community-based environmental education,
10 pollution prevention and citizen monitoring of
11 the environment.

12 We voted in our January meeting to align
13 our with the Virginia Department of Forestry.
14 They've been a wonderful agency to help us get
15 off the ground.

16 We're in the strategic planning process
17 at this time to decide how we're going to
18 carry out this mandate.

19 We hope to support watershed planning
20 which has been a policy of the State of
21 Virginia to various extents over the last ten
22 years.

23 Watershed planning involves -- an
24 important element of watershed planning is

1 round tables. There's an excellent round
2 table here in the Roanoke River Basin.

3 Round tables include local governments,
4 businesses, grassroots groups, colleges,
5 agricultural, state agencies, soil and water
6 conservation districts and other interested
7 citizens.

8 I'd like to see the sponsorship. A good
9 example of what we try to do is we like to see
10 the sponsorship of an envirothon program in
11 the Roanoke River Basin, for example, to be as
12 attractive as the sponsorship of a NASCAR
13 team.

14 Mr. Welsh mentioned collaboration,
15 watersheds and federal tools. We don't have
16 any federal partners at this time, but I think
17 that the Foundation for Virginia's Natural
18 Resources would welcome federal partnerships
19 and hopefully we could work with you.

20 Thank you.

21 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.

22 Twenty-seven.

23 MS. GILLAM: Hello. My name is
24 Catherine Gillam. I'm from Brownsburg,

1 Virginia, about 50 miles north of here. I am
2 the Virginia Program Manager for National
3 Parks Conservation Association. NPCA has just
4 this year opened a Virginia field office.

5 And I want to begin by thanking
6 particularly Deputy Secretary Scarlett for the
7 excellent job that Interior has done to
8 finalize the strong management policies for the
9 National Park Service.

10 The final phase of that effort
11 exemplified judgment and effort to reshape
12 and develop policy revisions that are
13 protective of our national park heritage and
14 respectful of local communities.

15 That is how cooperative conservation
16 should work and we look forward to seeing the
17 final version soon.

18 The national parks in Virginia are a
19 great and important part of our community.
20 Depending on how you count, there are between
21 20 and 30 units of the national park system.

22 I want to talk briefly about two of the
23 largest and most visited, Shenandoah National
24 Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway, but I also,

1 because we have representatives from Franklin
2 County here --

3 I just began this job at the beginning
4 of the year. It was just my enormous
5 privilege among visiting national park units
6 one of my favorites as far as the chance to go
7 to Booker T. Washington National Monument.

8 I haven't been there since I was a young
9 Girl Scout and that was a long, long time ago.
10 But it is a truly, though a smaller unit, a
11 really wonderful community asset.

12 But it's also a demonstration of how
13 important it is that there be cooperation
14 between local government, local developers and
15 will probably be, if that park is protected
16 from inappropriate development, it will be
17 because of state incentives and people coming
18 together.

19 Virginia's economy depends a great deal
20 on tourism. Among the top five visited sites
21 in Virginia are units of the national park
22 system. But those units suffer greatly from
23 insufficient budget. We are entirely in favor
24 of efforts for efficiency and community

1 involvement.

2 I'm currently participating in an effort
3 at Shenandoah National Park in something that
4 has long been needed for where they are
5 reaching out and have a leadership training
6 program to involve local community leaders.

7 By my understanding, it is funded under
8 the civic engagement project of the National
9 Park Service and I believe those funds have
10 recently been cut, but with an incredibly
11 promising start, we may not be able to
12 continue that.

13 I want to just on a personal note thank
14 as well. I participate in something called
15 Partnership Parks managed by the National
16 Forest Service through Virginia Tech and it's
17 just a wonderful example of getting not just
18 young people, but older people involved in the
19 science and research.

20 Thank you very much.

21 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
22 Twenty-eight.

23 MR. HENDERSON: Good afternoon. I

24 almost said good morning. I'm Lee Henderson.

1 I'm a local engineer and we serve the
2 development community. My firm is Lumsden
3 Associates.

4 And I want to go on record first off to
5 say that we are not against conservation of
6 our natural resources in any ways but there
7 seems to be some confusion.

8 In the past few years we've had many
9 jobs that have been bogged down by the Army
10 Corps of Engineers and the State DEQ and it
11 all seems to be over the interpretation of the
12 Clean Water Act and jurisdictional waters.

13 Lately in our area, the Corps of
14 Engineers and DEQ seem to have been flexing
15 their muscles specifically on what is called
16 Waters of the U.S. or jurisdictional waters.

17 Some of our clients have been delayed as
18 much as a year and fined due to this process.

19 The Corps of Engineers and DEQ have
20 claimed jurisdiction over streams and swells,
21 and I'm not talking about wetlands here, I'm
22 talking about streams and swells.

23 Some watersheds have been claimed as
24 waters of the U.S. and jurisdictional waters

1 have been as small as three acres on a hill.

2 It's our understanding that they have
3 claimed these rights by the power given to
4 them by the Clean Water Act.

5 In June of this year it appeared that
6 the United States Supreme Court ruled that the
7 Corps of Engineers had gone beyond the Clean
8 Water Act by making landowners obtain permits
9 that were unnecessary.

10 Based on this ruling, it's our
11 understanding that the Corps of Engineers has
12 been asked to stop delineating streams at
13 least in our area. I'm not sure we or they
14 know what to do.

15 It seems that Supreme Court Justice
16 Scalia's comment needs some attention as he
17 talked about the immense expansion of federal
18 regulation of land use that has occurred under
19 the Clean Water Act and argued that the only
20 way to cut back on it was to restore a common
21 sense definition of navigable waters.

22 And I think that's the problem. I think
23 there's just not a set definition of navigable
24 waters.

1 Our development community has been in
2 turmoil over the last couple of years with
3 permits and fines related to this issue. We
4 also seem to be in a state of limbo on the
5 subject.

6 It's my opinion that the limits of
7 jurisdiction in streams and swells needs to be
8 defined so that engineers, as well as
9 regulatory officials know what to do and can
10 better serve our communities and the
11 environment. Thank you.

12 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. I think 29
13 is next, but do you have a total on the
14 numbers?

15 SPEAKER: I guess 58 people in the room.
16 I don't know how many, maybe half that will
17 speak.

18 THE FACILITATOR: I'm thinking of a
19 lunch break. Some of you can run out and some
20 of us are up here.

21 How many more people are there that want
22 to comment that haven't commented yet? Okay.

23 Then what I think we should do is we can
24 take a couple more and then take a 45-minute

1 lunch break and then we'll come back.

2 We definitely will get everybody in.

3 I'm just trying to plan the schedule. So, two
4 more and then we'll take a lunch break.

5 Go ahead.

6 MS. COOPER: Thank you and I'd like to
7 applaud your efforts in involving the public.
8 My name is Jennie Cooper. I live in Floyd
9 County, Virginia, and I'm speaking today as a
10 public citizen and landowner.

11 I also served as Chairman of a landowner
12 association impacting farmers and landowners
13 in our county. I'm also on the safety
14 standards committee for Department of
15 Transportation.

16 I believe in citizen involvement. It
17 came out of my becoming an angry public and
18 the lessons that I learned from that. And I'd
19 like to share those lessons with you since the
20 whole idea about cooperative conservation is
21 about working with people.

22 I believe you have involved people on a
23 grassroots level in the community and for that
24 you need strong communities.

1 Right now what I have observed working
2 with the public on a grassroots level is
3 people don't get involved because they don't
4 trust local, state or government officials.

5 Some of the reasons, just doing a really
6 brief assessment is that the filing and
7 permitting process is all over. I understand
8 developers feel they're burdensome from a
9 public perspective. When we get a notice and
10 we are allowed to get involved, it's usually
11 as a result of some expedited process and it's
12 after a decision has been made.

13 And it's a one-way process. The public
14 gets two or three minutes to speak and comment
15 on something that's already been decided and
16 that feels meaningless.

17 I have seen some benefit, but for the
18 most part, many people don't come out that are
19 impacted and could have very valuable input
20 into the process but it's too late and there
21 is no way to genuinely be involved in a
22 two-way street.

23 A lot of the studies have been in --
24 People have moved towards scientific studies.

1 What I'm observing in some federal projects is
2 that when scientific studies are countered by
3 other scientific roots, those are not taken
4 seriously.

5 It's basically we have a study, here it
6 is and, you know, if you find a problem with
7 it, tough, we're going forward with it.

8 It's often these studies are not done by
9 neutral parties. So that, again, is a barrier
10 to public trust.

11 You know, I have said that public input
12 is a one-way process and I believe that what
13 needs to happen is there needs to be a look at
14 the public participation design, involve
15 dialogue, get people involved earlier when
16 there could be some meaningful input and
17 you're going to see buy-in and commitment.

18 Trust is eroded when they see regulatory
19 efforts towards the citizen being applied
20 differently than towards corporations and
21 businesses.

22 I would like to also support that the
23 state authority be given a lot of support.
24 I've seen in the federal level a

1 real diminishment in state authority and I
2 think it's critical if you want public buy-in
3 you have to support the state and the
4 community.

5 Thank you very much.

6 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Thirty.

7 MR. TALLY: Bad idea to be the last
8 speaker before lunch. My name is Steve Tally
9 and thank you very much for having this
10 session. I was actually program liaison for
11 Virginia assigned to the parks and
12 conservation recreation. I'll refer to this
13 program as HAP. It's an EPA supported
14 cooperative conservation initiative in the
15 Central Appalachian Mountains of Maryland,
16 Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

17 Recently each of these states received
18 modest EPA support, thank you very much EPA,
19 to put liaisons on the job to work with
20 conservation projects, projects that are
21 rooted in local action and they're reliant on
22 local knowledge.

23 The fundamental building blocks for this
24 initiative are local partnerships and

1 collaboration.

2 The proposed legislation outlined in
3 your June 26th, 2006 memo is the first to a
4 good step to enhancing cooperative
5 conservation, but need to have strategies that
6 really promote cooperative conservation or
7 promote cooperation across agencies.

8 HAP is such a strategy. Our main focus
9 is to work across agency lines to develop and
10 advantage every opportunity whether it
11 originates in a government program or is idea
12 from a local interest government or otherwise
13 to increase the likelihood of local folks in
14 charge of their own destinies and without fear
15 of regulatory oversight will become better
16 stewards.

17 I encourage you to learn about this HAP
18 program and support it.

19 Aside from this initiative, let me say
20 that Virginia has a very successful history of
21 building cooperative partnerships and using
22 them to affect good conservation.

23 One of our most useful tools is that of
24 soil and water conservation districts. I'm

1 sure you all know the districts looking at
2 subdivisions and as such are governed by local
3 boards who manage them.

4 These boards are the local community.
5 They're at least a very strong part of the
6 local community.

7 Districts, along with our federal
8 partners and RCS, for example, deliver
9 conservation programs to willing clients.

10 Virginia's lead non-point source agency,
11 the Department of Conservation and Recreation,
12 is on record as stating that their two most
13 important partners are, in fact, districts and
14 local governments.

15 Recently, Virginia's Governor, Tim
16 Kaine, at a General Assembly recognized the
17 need for additional local service delivery
18 staff in order to make our voluntary program
19 successful because current staffing levels
20 cannot keep up with the demand of the
21 services.

22 The General Assembly funded Virginia's
23 Soil Work Conservation districts at additional
24 two million dollars specifically from

1 technical conservation delivery staff starting
2 this July 1.

3 This is support directly to districts of
4 federal partner, NRCS, a critical element at
5 this local level. But even as Virginia has
6 stepped forward to increase local conservation
7 delivery, capacity, federal capacity, has
8 slumped.

9 In the '90s, the 1990's, the NRCS had
10 over 260 staff in Virginia, most in the field.
11 Now, they're down to 170 or 180. And even
12 with most of those in the field, this
13 workforce is just inadequate to support their
14 Virginia partners and to deliver their own
15 programs. This in a time when the demand for
16 and opportunities for conservation service
17 delivery are increasing.

18 Local partners --

19 THE FACILITATOR: You're almost done.

20 MR. TALLY: I'm done?

21 THE FACILITATOR: Almost.

22 MR. TALLY: As director of the head
23 water and salt water conservation district in
24 Augusta County, we have a dedicated

1 knowledgeable staff, but we need help and we
2 need some more NRCS folks in the field.

3 Thank you.

4 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. We're
5 going to go ahead and take a lunch break.
6 We're going to convene back at one o'clock
7 sharp.

8 In the meantime, I think there is going
9 to be immediate availability for the panelists
10 and that will occur right outside the glass
11 doors. And we'll convene here at one o'clock
12 sharp.

13 Thank you for your participation.

14

15 (A recess was taken.)

16

17 THE FACILITATOR: I think where we left
18 off was number 31.

19 MR. WILLIS: Let me fix this thing here.
20 I probably don't need this, actually, because
21 I've been told I speak pretty loudly, but I'll
22 try to tone it down since I'm on microphone.

23 My name is Brent Willis and I'm an owner
24 of a local erosion control contractor and

1 storm water management company.

2 And, actually, coming -- speaking from
3 almost on both sides of the fence today. I'm
4 kind of also speaking on behalf of Roanoke
5 Regional Home Builders of which my company is
6 a member.

7 And one of the, I understand, the major
8 topics of this listening session has been the
9 Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act
10 and one of the major things that I've seen in
11 my past life as a government employee of both
12 local and state working with soil and water
13 conservation districts in the State of
14 Virginia is the dichotomy and the separation
15 between agricultural practices and as has been
16 mentioned earlier today, the best management
17 practices, the cost sharing program through
18 the state, and through the USDA and FSA as
19 Ms. Easter mentioned earlier.

20 But that and the fact that there really
21 are no similar incentives on the development
22 side of the things.

23 We have cost share programs, we have the
24 CREP, the CRP, the WHIT programs, the EQUIP

1 programs, wildlife incentives, wildlife
2 incentives for agriculture, and when I say
3 agriculture, I don't mean the small hometown
4 farmers like my wife and myself among many
5 others in this part of the state, but the huge
6 corporate-owned as well as government-owned
7 agri-businesses that are out there, they reap
8 rewards for turning pastureland into --
9 buffers and creating wildlife habitats and
10 that kind of thing.

11 We are seeing, even though we're in

12 rural Southwestern Virginia, we're seeing an
13 upswing of developers and actual home builders
14 that are becoming more involved, they're doing
15 a lot more research on building greener.

16 They're wanting to do that for their
17 projects, for their residential subdivisions,
18 for their commercial projects and for their
19 home individual homeowners that they're
20 building for.

21 And there really is no vehicle for that
22 to be done now in the State of Virginia and
23 I'm assuming for the nation.

24 So with the USDA, the partnerships,

1 we've got protocols, we've got the precedent
2 set with agricultural programs now and we can
3 look at urban and suburban.

4 Like I said, as the gentleman mentioned
5 earlier, the urban and suburban PMP's were the
6 focus on erosion control, sediment control,
7 storm water management, wildlife buffers,
8 wildlife corridors, transportation routes and
9 that kind of thing for wildlife which,
10 ultimately, that's what we're all here to do.

11 So, thank you for your time. Thanks for
12 coming.

13 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
14 Thirty-two. Thirty-three. Thirty-four.

15 MR. CLINE: My name is Stewart Cline and
16 I work for Environmental Services and
17 Consulting which is a small environmental firm
18 in Blacksburg, Virginia, and our clients
19 include both developers as well as industry
20 federal and state agencies, and we do work for
21 citizen monitoring groups.

22 One of the things that our clients have
23 seen is they want to do the right thing. And,
24 you know, if I talk with some of our developer

1 clients, they're trying to do the right thing.

2 But, they're B and S plans conflict with
3 their storm water and, you know, some of the
4 best management practices, the smart science
5 is contrary to what's written in the
6 regulations and, therefore, they're not
7 allowed to do it.

8 And it's frustrating because we go to
9 meetings and we meet with several agencies
10 and, you know, we have a plan that's on the
11 ground and ready to go and all of a sudden
12 wait, that's not going to meet up with ENS or
13 that's not going to be up with VDOT and so the
14 smart science is then precluded.

15 And so I think one of the things that we
16 need to focus on is looking at the science and
17 using the best available science that's out
18 there to make these decisions.

19 At the same time, we need to focus that
20 and once we know that, we have to educate both
21 the regulators as well as citizens and citizen
22 monitoring groups. They generate some very
23 good data. And that's arbitrarily excluded.

24 But we need to just use them, the best

1 science out there, and then educate the people
2 who need to know that so that we can use that
3 science in developing plans and smarter
4 developing overall. Thank you.

5 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
6 Thirty-five. Thirty-six. Thirty-seven.
7 Thirty-eight.

8 MS. LOCKMORE: Good afternoon. I'm Nina
9 Lockmore. I'm Virginia Director of Government
10 Relations for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.
11 I'm here hundreds of miles from the Chesapeake
12 Bay to speak with you about the vital
13 importance of farmers and farmland in Virginia
14 tributaries and the bay.

15 With many counties in Virginia being top
16 agriculture producers not only within the bay
17 watershed but for the entire country, this
18 issue is extremely important to all
19 Virginians.

20 Virginia and the federal government have
21 many programs which are already in place to
22 help not only serve farmers and farmland, but
23 also to improve water quality for all
24 Virginians.

1 These programs play a key role in
2 preserving this vital piece of Virginia's
3 economy as well as implementing cost effective
4 solutions for Virginia's water quality
5 problems.

6 All these problems lack is significant
7 and reliable funding. According to the 36
8 tributaries strategies developed the state
9 Chesapeake Bay states pursuant to the
10 Chesapeake 2000 agreement the farmers within
11 the entire bay watershed need an additional
12 200 million dollars per year in federal
13 assistance as well as similar amounts of state
14 funding in order to bring excess nitrogen and
15 phosphorus back to acceptable levels.

16 This money is needed to support bay area
17 farmers in designing and implementing nitrogen
18 and phosphorus reduction conservation
19 practices in their farming operations.

20 An additional 200 million a year in
21 federal funds authorized for the bay area
22 farmers can eliminate excess nitrogen and
23 phosphorous reduction practices which is one
24 point two billion over the life of the next

1 farm bill making it an incredible goal.

2 However, on the other hand, the 2002

3 farm bill authorized nearly 130 billion over
4 its six-year life of the program, more than 75
5 times our request.

6 Farmers will enroll in these programs
7 and do what's best for their farm and many
8 have been turned away solely because of lack
9 of funding.

10 These programs are cooperative
11 conservation at its best and bring together
12 farmers, business owners, environmentalists
13 and landowners and all that is needed is
14 funding. Thank you.

15 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number 39.

16 MR. GEISER: Good afternoon. My name is
17 Vince Geiser, that's G-E-I-S-E-R, and I'm here
18 today to talk on behalf of the Pulp and
19 Paperwork Resource Council better known as the
20 PPRC.

21 We represent around one and a-half
22 million timber related workers in the United
23 States and we're dedicated in serving the
24 environment while taking into account the

1 economic stability of the workforce and the
2 surrounding communities.

3 The PPRC was formed in the late '80s due
4 to the listing of the Spotted Owl and the
5 thousands of jobs that were lost out of the
6 Pacific Northwest.

7 Due to that, the Endangered Species Act
8 mandate needs to be modernized and updated

9 after every 30 years.

10 Since its inception in 1973 there have
11 been over 12 hundred species of plants and
12 animals listed, but only around 10 have been
13 recovered and that's a one percent recovery
14 rate. The communities figure show they need
15 reform.

16 The PPRC wants to conserve the nation's

17 endangered species but wants it done in a
18 partnership with the federal government, not
19 under the demand and control authority of
20 federal agencies.

21 We believe that there should be a
22 greater role for state and local government in
23 all ESA decisions.

24 Even better, the full participation in

1 recovery plans development and implementation,
2 balancing recovery team membership among all
3 parties affected by final decisions.

4 And, finally, the PPRC believes that
5 regulations developed should be based on sound
6 science, not political science.

7 The impact on people, property and jobs
8 should be evaluated when making these
9 regulations. The ESA should be about recovery
10 of a species, not just preventing its
11 extinction.

12 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number 40.

13 MR. FOSTER: Hello. I want to use my
14 tidbit of time to discuss something a little
15 bit different.

16 My name is David Foster and I appear
17 here as the Executive Director of a grassroots
18 citizens organization called Rail Solution.

19 We came into existence in 2003 primarily
20 to oppose an enormous highway project in the
21 I-81 corridor of Virginia and our membership
22 today is concentrated in this corridor in
23 Western Virginia and Northeast Tennessee. We
24 have about 13 hundred active participants.

1 What we were worrying about was the fact
2 that in Virginia we have this somewhat averse
3 piece of legislation called the Public Private
4 Transportation Act that allows private
5 companies to come forward with transportation
6 proposals regardless of whether they make any
7 sense. And, of course, because they are
8 backed by huge engineering construction
9 companies, they tend to be massive.

10 And we have been trying to redirect the
11 focus here on a balanced transportation
12 initiative rather than on taking it for
13 granted that what we need to answer every
14 problem of congestion and growth is more
15 lengths of highway.

16 In fact, I don't think we can in
17 Virginia or any place else anymore continue to
18 provide for constant growth in trucking and
19 other traffic by adding more lengths of
20 highway. We need a smarter transportation
21 paradigm.

22 So in some sense, I'm talking to you
23 about transportation as an environmental issue
24 and I know that's unusual, but Rail Solution

1 is very concerned with making sure that the
2 parallel rail line in this corridor that runs
3 all the way from Knoxville to Harrisonburg
4 gets some attention.

5 We feel very strongly that upgrading and
6 double-tracking this rail corridor could
7 provide equivalent capacity to adding eight to
8 12 lanes of highway at a far lower economic
9 and environmental cost.

10 The footprint of a railroad is much
11 smaller on the land and the ton mile
12 transportation of freight by rail is both far
13 less polluting and far more energy efficient.
14 So, that's what our initiative is all about.

15 On your table during the lunch I
16 deposited a piece of our educational
17 propaganda and I also deposited a pen. At
18 Environment Virginia this year at a conference
19 in Lexington we couldn't forward a big booth
20 like lots of the big companies and federal
21 agencies, but a lot of people said we had the
22 best pens.

23 So, it has our website and address on
24 there and I encourage you and your colleagues

1 to become familiar with that and when drafted
2 environmental impact statements come to the
3 federal level like the one on I-81 is right
4 now, please look at them and see that they
5 aren't just window dressing for a preferred
6 alternative but really do examine all the
7 opportunities equally. Thank you.

8 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Forty-one.

9 MR. MALLON: Good afternoon. I am Tim
10 Mallon and I am the Environmental Affairs
11 Manager for Appalachian Power Company.

12 What I would like to do is kind of both
13 issue an invitation and ask people -- give
14 people kind of a challenge on some of this
15 cooperative conservation measures.

16 A lot of people don't go to industry
17 when they've got ideas like this, good ideas
18 on what they can do.

19 I urge everybody, and I especially ask
20 the agency people if you could facilitate
21 these in any way because sometimes they are
22 difficult, but when you've got an idea, meet
23 with your local industry.

24 I'd like to give one quick example.

1 About seven years ago near Charleston, West
2 Virginia, there was a big economic development
3 activity that eventually resulted in about a
4 billion dollars worth of investment in West
5 Virginia.

6 They needed to impact on a wetlands.
7 They came to us and we set-up a program with
8 them, Wetlands Mitigation. We basically took
9 68 acres of prime wetland area we owned and
10 put it into a conservation easement.

11 That's pretty much where it would have
12 stayed except for one local high school
13 biology teacher. She came to us and said
14 look, why don't we turn this area into a
15 wetlands educational process?

16 She came to us every week for like a
17 year and a-half over and over and over and
18 eventually she got enough interest that we did
19 it. We went in and developed a wetlands area
20 that had boardwalks, it had paths, it had
21 biologists that came in and did signage and
22 everything.

23 In the last three years, we've had over
24 3,000 students tour this wetlands area to

1 learn about wetlands.

2 It's something that came from the idea
3 of a single biology teacher because she did
4 not take no for an answer and she kept coming
5 to the local industry.

6 I just want to encourage everybody and I
7 certainly do hope if you guys can help us out
8 on these things we can figure ways to do it.
9 That's all. Thank you.

10 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Forty-two.
11 Forth-three.

12 MS. HODGES: I'm Harriet Hodges of
13 Salem, Virginia, and I'm delighted to be
14 allowed to address this gathering. I'm going
15 to speak in a kind of shorthand and to three
16 slices of this problem.

17 We all know that everything's
18 interrelated so I'll allow you to make the
19 connections.

20 First, I'd like to speak for railroads.
21 Railroads are our friends, cars and trucks are
22 the enemy. If you can remember that, that
23 will be very helpful to you in your debates.

24 Rail has the infrastructure already in

1 place. The cost of extending it is very small
2 compared to say -- on I-81. Rail is fossil
3 fuel efficient. I hope no one needs to be
4 prodded to know what that means now.

5 It's fuel efficient if you take in
6 environmental co-efficients by a factor of a
7 hundred, protects air and water as against

8 highways which are definitely deleterious to
9 air and water.

10 Rail does not further fragment wildlife
11 habitats. That's a very important point. We
12 should always favor anything that is a
13 long-term solution rather than short-term,
14 which brings me to my next related topic which
15 is EPA and its moral leadership. Make that
16 its failed moral leadership.

17 We were very pleased to have established
18 the EPA during the '70s and the '80s and we
19 looked to it for long range plans.

20 My husband and I were farmers in Wythe
21 and Craig County. We were not crop farmers.
22 We were dependent on cattle and sheep for our
23 income, but we welcomed coyotes.

24 Now, albeit involved with a certain

1 dismay, but we assumed that the larger
2 conservation community knew what they were
3 doing in reintroducing predators.

4 We also viewed with some dismay the
5 ruling that we could not tile any cornfields
6 which we badly needed. But, again, our
7 interests were short-term. We knew that the
8 EPA interests at that time were long-term.

9 We no longer feel that way. We've seen
10 EPA just seemingly submerged under corporate
11 requests. And I'd like to remind everyone
12 that corporations are essentially immoral.
13 They have to be. By legal definition, they
14 are committed to stockholder shares and its
15 short-term gain.

16 If a company finds that a project will
17 not profit in the short-term, it is legally
18 required to bypass that project or it can't do
19 it by definition.

20 What this means is we must have an
21 organization that is morally superior, if it's
22 still allowed to us to talk about morals in
23 this very strange civilization that we live
24 in.

1 We see that the EPA has advocated on
2 many levels, on many -- mercury, for instance.
3 Endangered species is being weakened. It's
4 harder and harder to have official standing if
5 you want to pursue an environmental study.

6 THE FACILITATOR: You're almost up.

7 MS. HODGES: Right. And for my third
8 point, if you have not seen incorporated into
9 your own feeling and politics an inconvenient
10 truth, then perhaps you really should not be
11 saying anything about the environment at all.

12 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
13 Forty-four. Forty-five. Forty-six.
14 Forty-seven.

15 MR. MODICA: Thank you. I'm Bill
16 Modica. I'm the Chairman of the Upper Roanoke
17 River Round Table.

18 THE FACILITATOR: Bill, could you spell
19 your last name, please?

20 MR. MODICA: M-O-D-I-C-A. We are the
21 grassroots citizens in this area who care
22 about the Roanoke River. We offer a forum for
23 discussion of issues about the Roanoke River
24 and like all round tables, we are open to all

1 members whether they are agency people,
2 business people, individuals, non-government
3 organizations and academics.

4 We've been around now for six years
5 having begun as a result of a series of
6 workshops under the sponsorship of the Canaan
7 Valley Institute who were mentioned earlier
8 today.

9 While open to anyone, we are essentially
10 run by our Board of Directors, some of whom
11 are here today.

12 Over the years, we have interacted and
13 cooperated with the Virginia Department of
14 Environmental Quality, Virginia Department of
15 Conservation and Recreation, the City of
16 Roanoke and County of Roanoke, the Nature
17 Conservancy, Virginia Save Our Streams and
18 many others.

19 But, we have had no interaction with any
20 federal agency which is why I'm here today, to
21 encourage these agency representatives to
22 reach out to local watershed groups and to
23 seek their input whenever they are about to
24 implement new rules and regulations.

1 The special interests to our members are
2 streamside buffers, water quality monitoring
3 and protection and the restoration of damaged
4 or degraded streams. We feel that the Roanoke
5 River is often overlooked in federal funding.

6 Let me wrap up by saying or mentioning
7 that our group's next public event is going to
8 be on October 7th when we will join with other
9 partners such as the Clean Valley Council, the
10 Sierra Club and the City of Roanoke in a
11 valley-wide water waste clean-up campaign.

12 And also let me thank you all for
13 choosing Roanoke as the site for this meeting.

14 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
15 Forty-eight.

16 MS. CHRISTOPULOS: I'm Diana, D-I-A-N-A,
17 Christopulos, C-H-R-I-S-T-O-P-U-L-O-S. It
18 took me all of first grade to learn that.

19 I'm here as a hiker, a canoer, a
20 landowner here in Salem and as a
21 representative of a local group of the Sierra
22 Club and I'm very happy that you came to our
23 beautiful valley and are getting a chance to
24 see it.

1 I appreciate the power of the federal
2 government to do good. I grew up as an Air
3 Force brat all over the country. My father
4 bought the land for the Minuteman -- and if
5 we had more time, I could tell you how we did
6 it cooperatively with the landowners in
7 Wyoming, my home state.

8 He wanted to work for housing and urban
9 development and did that for 20 years and did
10 a lot of work there as well.

11 I support the remarks of Rupert Cutler,
12 the Audubon and others, the rail solution is
13 going to be imperative, some of the specific
14 things that we would support.

15 I would like to talk to you particularly
16 about the Endangered Species Act. I would
17 like to point out that of all the species that
18 have ever been listed in that Act, 99 percent
19 are non-extinct. That is the purpose of the
20 Act. We wish they had all recovered, but 99
21 percent are non-extinct and so the Act is
22 working.

23 Any changes in the Act, I believe, as
24 does the Sierra Club, are a matter of trust.

1 You must trust if we're going to cooperate.

2 We must trust the federal government.

3 Will cooperative conservation be
4 something like healthy forests, like something
5 out of George Orwell's 1984 when it says one
6 thing and does the opposite? We wonder.

7 Currently, if you look at healthy
8 forests, the administration has failed to
9 enforce laws and has actually worked to
10 dismantle protections in our national forests.
11 The increased logging of the forest has
12 resulted in serious environmental degradation
13 and loss of habitat for fish and wildlife.

14 And you have to remember, the natural
15 forests only provide ten percent of all the
16 timber in this country. Ninety-eight percent
17 is on private land. Why do we have to have
18 this destruction on the small amount of
19 national forests?

20 Here recently in our area, another
21 erosion of trust with the recent misguided
22 effort to sell forest service lands to private
23 developers two mountaintops over in the
24 Catawba Valley which roused bi-partisan

1 opposition, thankfully, by our own Congressman
2 as well.

3 It was an ill thought out scheme, but it
4 further erodes our trust in the current
5 administration.

6 The Environmental Species Act was passed
7 as a result of wise, moderate bi-partisan
8 thinking long before the granger, divisiveness
9 and even greed that characterizes current
10 administration efforts.

11 We encourage you to enforce and support
12 the Endangered Species Act as it is currently
13 written. Thank you for your time.

14 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.
15 Forty-nine.

16 MR. ALDRIDGE: Hello. My name is David
17 Aldridge and I'm from Franklin County. I'm a
18 third generation landowner. I'm also a fellow
19 member of the Sierra Club. But first and
20 foremost, I'd like thank you all that's here
21 for services.

22 That's why I appreciate the fact that
23 I'm allowed to speak today, because I feel
24 like in a day where you have to have a

1 lobbyist in every voice heard, it's a nice
2 change. So, thank you for that.

3 I support the ideas of cooperative
4 conservation. I think that it will provide a
5 more direct route for the interests of the
6 people to be in association of the interests
7 of the national government. And I think
8 that's also what we need to be concerned with
9 is the interest of the people.

10 When I hear things about the Bush
11 administration's policy directive on
12 eliminating the Clean Water Act for a lot of
13 streams and water systems throughout the
14 nation, it gives me a lot of pause. I'm very
15 concerned about this.

16 I think that Acts like that, the Clean
17 Water Act, the Clean Air Act, help protect the
18 average American citizen whereas getting rid
19 of them has a tendency to accommodate the
20 industry more.

21 And, ultimately, they were put in place
22 for us, the citizens. That's why I think it's
23 important that they are maintained.

24 Just in short, I'd like to say that I

1 think cooperative conservation is a wonderful
2 initiative and as long as we use cooperation
3 as the main foundation, it will be a good
4 initiative. But I think we need have to have
5 that backbone of the Clean Air, the Endangered
6 Species Act and the Clean Water Act to make
7 sure to use it's used as our yardstick to make
8 sure we're meeting these initiatives in an
9 effective way. Thank you.

10 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Fifty.

11 MR. MOLES: I missed my turn. Lunch was
12 slowly served. I'm Jerry Moles. I am a
13 landowner in Montgomery County. I'm the
14 Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Blue
15 Ridge Forestry Co-op and Consulting Director
16 of Land Stewardship for the New River Land
17 Trust.

18 As we try to protect our landscapes
19 here, we're faced with a difficult problem.
20 The problem is that our farmers, our people
21 who own rural land are economically
22 disadvantaged. There is no investment money
23 to increase their incomes.

24 Farmers cannot market. They are price

1 acceptors, not price setters. And no one
2 barters on behalf of the farmers unless we
3 have cooperatives.

4 Sadly, the Southern States Cooperative
5 Foundation invested about 100,000 dollars for
6 helping us set-up the Blue Ridge Forestry
7 Co-op.

8 We now need to do a cattle co-op in
9 Grayson County, but there's no more money from
10 the USDA to help with this process.

11 Someone has to barter on behalf of the
12 landowners for better timber pricing, for
13 better cattle prices, for our row crops and
14 this isn't being done.

15 I put a piece of paper on your desk
16 before, 'We Are Cooperative Conservation'.
17 We've been practicing land care based on the
18 Australian model for about a year and a-half
19 now in Grayson County.

20 We are pursuing three things. First of
21 all, we're looking at our forests. Ten to 40
22 percent of our land is covered with invasive
23 species. These have to be removed because
24 this land is not good for forests or our

1 pasture or row crops.

2 Second thing we have to do is timber
3 stand improvement. Our land has been high
4 graded when we call in loggers now. They're
5 going to make as much as they can. They take
6 out the best timber.

7 But much of that best timber they take
8 out is adding value of 14 to 20 percent
9 depending on species. If this was a stock
10 portfolio, you could get rid of your bad
11 performing stocks and you would hang on to
12 those that are performing best.

13 So the way we harvest timber, whether
14 it's done once in a lifetime, degrades the
15 capacity of the local landowner to participate
16 in the economy, to reinvest.

17 We're asking the landowners to do all
18 sorts of things. -- operations in Virginia,
19 if you break even you're lucky. Where do our
20 cattle go? Where does the corn grow? It's
21 cheaper to move cattle than it is corn so
22 they'll go to feed lots in the Midwest.

23 We're working with Food City -- it's a
24 food chain of over a hundred stores -- and

1 Congressman Boucher and Congressman
2 Goodlatte's office looking to develop a value
3 added beef industry.

4 We're also with the forest co-op. We're
5 certified under Smart -- and we'll get a
6 better price for that.

7 What is needed? Investment and
8 facilitators. People don't know how to get
9 organized. They don't know what the options
10 are. Second, our institutions have to change.
11 We have to invest in places like our land
12 grant universities, Virginia Tech, so they can
13 make the necessary adjustments to meet our
14 demands.

15 And third, we have to set-up grants and
16 remodel loan funds because farmers can't
17 change unless there are resources available.
18 So, we need funding in these areas.

19 Our farmers are on their knees. And for
20 10,000 years, investments have -- from rural
21 to urban. Let's reverse that again.

22 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Number 50.

23 MR. MADELL: Good afternoon. I'm Scott
24 Madell. I'm a partner at Hayes, Seay, Mattern

1 and Mattern, a local engineering environmental
2 consulting firm. Appreciate you coming to our
3 area and spending time.

4 What I wanted to talk about just briefly
5 was the coordination between local, state and
6 federal regulations.

7 Typically, we deal more with the local
8 than the state, but from an owner's
9 perspective and what they need to know is that
10 it's consistent. And some of the comments I
11 think you've heard about using the words
12 honorus and difficult and this kind of thing
13 doesn't necessarily stem from the regulation
14 itself, but more from the overlapping
15 jurisdiction from some of the conflicts of the
16 local, state and federal regulations.

17 For example, we've seen a lot of
18 conflicts in our water permits between the
19 local storm detention regulations and the
20 wetlands regulations.

21 So those are the kinds of things,
22 without going into a whole lot of detail, that
23 create some frustration and for us, too, as
24 consultants and we're trying to figure out

1 exactly what the regulations are and how to
2 apply those and tell our client exactly what
3 it is that they need to do.

4 The timing also is something that
5 creates some frustration. We have a landfill
6 permit right now that we've got to comment on
7 in Indiana -- and already had a survey done a
8 month ago and just last week we got a comment
9 from the state on Roanoke Best which kind of
10 caught us off guard.

11 So, just a comment to consider. I know
12 it's easier said than done, but to coordinate
13 the state and local with the federal
14 government is something I think would really
15 be -- something that would make the
16 regulations work better and more palatable for
17 everyone involved.

18 And just to wrap it up, I think from my
19 perspective, changing the regulations is not
20 necessarily where we need to go. It's
21 difficult enough to keep up with it as it is.
22 So being consistent between the state, the
23 federal and the local governments and just
24 keeping it the same so everybody knows what

1 the rules are would be helpful. Thank you.

2 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Fifty-one.

3 MS. MILLS: My name is Susan Mills and
4 I'm Executive Director of Friends of the Blue
5 Ridge Parkway.

6 As an organization, we model cooperative
7 conservation. We involve the next generation
8 in our programs.

9 We had Chestnut seedlings in the
10 restoration of the parkway views. We empower
11 individuals to be responsible for their
12 natural resources. We are a part of Take
13 Pride in America program encouraging
14 volunteerism and stewardship of our national
15 parks. We represent 8,000 members.

16 The Blue Ridge Parkway is a 469 mile
17 linear park connecting the Shenandoah National
18 Park with the Smokey Mountains National Park.
19 The Blue Ridge Parkway is also a major
20 economic engine for the 29 counties it passes
21 through in both states, Virginia and North
22 Carolina.

23 Deputy Secretary Scarlett, we greatly
24 appreciate the support that you've given the

1 national parks. Today, I ask you to take a
2 closer look at the Blue Ridge Parkway, its
3 need and the funding that has been provided.

4 The Blue Ridge Parkway is the most
5 visited park with approximately 20 million
6 visitors annually and yet the Blue Ridge
7 Parkway appears to rank lowest in receiving
8 federal funds.

9 Friends respectfully request that you
10 review the formula for your criteria which
11 determines the amount of funding provided to a
12 park. Friends recommends review how
13 visitation is incorporated into this formula.

14 If America's most scenic drive and the
15 most visited park nationally ranks lowest in
16 funding, it suggests that the formula for park
17 funding needs to be revised.

18 I sincerely ask that you request a State
19 of the Union of the Blue Ridge Parkway and the
20 projections for 2008.

21 I sincerely ask that you re-evaluate
22 your funding formula and look at exactly how
23 visitation plays in this and maybe assign this
24 a greater or higher priority in the outcome.

1 In closing, review the Blue Ridge
2 Parkway's needs, make sure you look at them
3 very closely. Consider the Blue Ridge
4 Parkway's visitation. Consider the 18 million
5 dollars impact of the Blue Ridge Parkway to
6 the 29 counties and two states and look
7 closely, closely at the funding that is
8 provided.

9 Thank you in advance for your
10 willingness to take a closer look at America's
11 most scenic drive and our national treasure,
12 the Blue Ridge Parkway.

13 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Fifty-two.
14 Fifty-three. Fifty-four. Fifty-five.
15 Fifty-six. Fifty-seven. Fifty-eight. How
16 many do we have, Marcy?

17 SPEAKER: Sixty.

18 THE FACILITATOR: Okay. Fifty-nine.
19 Sixty. Was there anybody that didn't get a
20 chance to speak or didn't get a card that
21 would like to?

22 Okay. If not, then I'm going to turn it
23 back over to Deputy Secretary Scarlett.

24 But first, on behalf of everybody up

1 here, I want to thank everybody for taking
2 time out of your day to come and I appreciate
3 your comments.

4 And I will turn it back over to Lynn.

5 MS. SCARLETT: Thank you, Dave. I
6 really appreciate all of you taking time out.
7 I know all of you have a real day job and to
8 come to an event like this and spend your time
9 listening to others and then speaking to us I
10 know is difficult. Some of you have traveled
11 a long way, but we really appreciate it.

12 I am extremely gratified listening here.
13 I took extensive notes. I know Dave Tenny and
14 Don did as well. But we also have recorded
15 everything. We have a professional
16 transcriber.

17 In fact, working with our facilitator,
18 Dave, we'll be taking all of the comments that
19 we got from the this session, one in Spokane
20 last week and 22 more that we'll be doing
21 around the country. We'll sort that into
22 categories of comments, summarize them, pour
23 through those and, hopefully, that will help
24 us to identify some common threads and

1 potentially some priorities that we can focus
2 on.

3 But, I really thank you all for coming.
4 It's been very instructive and such a diverse
5 group of people. It's been great.

6 I also really appreciate how genuine and
7 also how civilized everyone is. That's just
8 great. It's what the town hall experience is
9 all about. So thank you for coming, again.

10 I also want to underscore as Dave said
11 earlier, if you didn't get to speak or if you
12 have longer comments, white papers, whatever,
13 please submit them on the cards you were
14 given. There's a website. There's also a
15 number where you can fax materials.

16 All of those will be included in the
17 summaries that Dave and his associates work
18 on. So, please feel free to submit that kind
19 of material.

20 But, thank you again for being here.
21 Great community and environments and many of
22 you have come from quite far away. So, thank
23 you very much.

24

